The Axe at the Root OF PROFESSORS MISCARRIAGES IN

A *Plain Detection* of, and a *Wholsome Caveat against the Miscarriages* opposite to *Faith in God.*

By *Thomas Hall*, Minister of the Gospel

Mat. 3. 10.

Now also is the Axe laid unto the Root of the Trees, therefore every Tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

John 5. 14.

Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Isa. 7. 9.

If ye will not believe, surely you shall not be established.

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ERRATA.

Candid Reader

IN the two first sheets of this Treatise, the Author hath not found any faults, but in the Marginal Quotations; and he trusts thou wilt find none in the rest, but what thine ingenuity will correct or pardon. In those sheets thou maist; p. 3. for *sinatis* r. *sinaris*. And f. *Inarus* r. *Guarus*. p. 6. for *swidas* r. *suidas*. And for *justus* r. *gustus*. Vale.

To the *Cordial Mourners* in *England*, especially in *Exon*, *Crediton*, *Tiverton*, *Taunton*, *Barnstable*, *Bithesord*, *Torrington*, *Dartmouth*, and *Forey*, for the dreadful *Tokens* of God's *displeasure* against *the Land of their Nativity*, and the sad *Causes* thereof; The Author wisheth Grace and Peace.

Dear Hearts,

I Doubt not of your kind *acceptance*, and Christian *improvement* of this honest *Essay*, to lay the *Axe* of God's Word at the *Root* of the *Provocations of God's Sons and Daughters*. Are not you sensible of the *woful* (though but *partial*) *departures* of *your* God from *your own Souls*, and from *the Land of your Nativity*? Are not you *lamenting after the Ark*? 1 Sam. 7. 2. Are not you afraid that God is breaking *England's* staff of *Bands*, by breaking its staff of *Beauty*? that even *death* will follow *offending in Baal*? Yea, do not your hearts tremble at the very thoughts of what will farther ensue God's taking away the *Chariots and Horsemen of* your *Israel*? And would not you take the direct course to *re-injoy* the *smiles* of your *dearest Husband*, and to *prevent England's cutting down*? Yea, are not you convinced that the *Provocations of God's Sons and Daughters* go *nearest* to his *heart*? and that there is no hope even of their *Salvation*, so long as *vain thoughts* of escaping utter ruine, without true repentance *do lodg within them*? And are not you therefore resolved, that seeing *God* hath *laid* the *Axe* to the *root* of the *Trees*, you will now in good earnest *lay* the *Axe* to the *root* of *your own Sins*? that you will make it your main business to promote in your *own Souls*, yea and in *others* too, not only more *humiliation* for, but more *reformation* of what hath been amiss, as knowing, that *humiliation* without *reformation*, is like the *word* of *God* in the *Letter*, which *kills*, and not *quickens*; it *accents* sin, and not lesseneth it; it *continues* judgment, and not *removes* it? For your help therefore herein, I have endeavoured to *detect* and *caution* you against *the miscarriages opposite to Faith in God*; which, I dare say, are the *Root* of all your other Miscarriages: By *the sword of the Spirit*, and that as wielded by the skilful hands of several of *England's Worthies*, to whom you are refer'd in the Margin; I have fought neither with *small* nor

Zach. 11. 10, 14. Hos. 13. 1. 2 King. 2. 12. Deut. 32. 19. Jer. 4. 14. Mat. 3. 10. Ephes. 6. 17. 2 Chr. 18. 30.

great,

gross, but with your *King-sins*? It is said of Christ, *In the day* Psal. 110. 5. *of thy wrath thou shalt smite through Kings.* And is not this the day of *Christs* wrath, yea, of your wrath against your *sins*? Is not *Christ*, yea, are not *you angry* with them, and *troubled* for them? O then! shew that you have the *Spirit of Christ* in you; *smite through Kings*, I mean only your *Kingly-sins*; and then I am sure none will be able to stand before you: *Sculs* you will find your sins opposite to *Faith* to be; *each* of them hath *many followers*, and therefore may be called *Gad*, *Behold a Troop comes.* I have indeed purposely waved speaking of the *Miscarriages* opposite to *Faith*, with reference to its *immediate* object, *Jesus Christ*; not only because those are more taken notice of by convinced Souls in these days, than these with reference to its *ultimate* object, the *Deity through Christ*: But because those are most excellently handled by the Reverend Author of the late choice *Gospel-Glass*, *Ch.* 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, to which I shall once more refer you, and shall detain you no longer from making use of this *Axe*. But whilst I am whispering a word or two in the ears of such, as from the Miscarriages of *some* (and not all) Professors, in which they are not *countenanced*, but for which they are *condemned* by *Religion* and *Profession*, are so unreasonable as to *fall foul* upon *Religion* and *Profession*! It is true hereby *offences* do come, and *wo be to him by whom offences come.* Mat. 18. 7. *Whosoever shall offend*, i. e. lay a stumbling-block before *one of* Mat. 18. 7. *Christs little ones*, *it had been better a milstone were hung about his* 1 Pet. 2. 7. *neck*, *and he thrown into the Sea.* Wo be to such Professors, that Joh. 16. 1. by their being *spots*, *open the mouth of Blasphemy.* But wo be also unto all those that take offence against *Religion* and *Profession*, thereby. *Wo unto the World because of offences.* Such will be found at last to be *Blasphemers against God*, and runners in the broad way to *Atheism* and *Damnation.* Christ is a *stone of stumbling*, and a *rock of offence*, only to those that perish; *to them that believe, he is precious.* This is hinted *that none may be offended*, By your *Faith's* helper,

T. M.

Dec. 23. 1667.

* O that such would seriously read judicious Mr. *A. Burgess's* 71 *Serm.* in his most excellent Commentary on *Joh.* 17. I shall only transcribe for them one passage, *fol.* 377. *Would it not have been* (saith he) *horrible impiety, to have broken out against all the Apostles, and Christ himself; saying, Look what they are; It's as the Pharisees said, a company of Impostors and Deceivers, they are all for their own ends, they are all covetous, and though they pretend Religion, yet they are Hypocrites; and though they condemn the gross sins of the World, yet in secret they [illegible] had as any? would not such a tongue shew that it was set on fire of Hell, that [illegible] such things?*

Of Vain Curiosity.

Chap. I. *The Miscarriages opposite to the saving Knowledge of God: the apprehending Act of Faith.*

1. *Vain Curiosity.* Beware not only of *prying* into the affairs of your *Neighbour*, which no way concern you; but of *enquiring* into *Gods* Secrets. God hath made known, enough for our Salvation; but some things he hath concealed from us, and they do not belong unto us. *The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto us, and to our children for ever.* Have not you been guilty of not contenting your selves with Gods Revelations? Have not you desired and endeavoured to be wise *above what is written?* O the many *curious* and *unprofitable* questions, that have been framed about the *Decrees* of God, and the Works of *Providence!* We have not cryed with the Apostle, *How unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out!* Have not some of you been for *new-lights?* The *Serpent* beguiled *Eve* hereby: the *first* sin came in by an attempt to get *forbidden knowledge.* And what saith the Apostle? *I fear, lest by any means, as the Serpent beguiled* Eve, *through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity, that is in Christ.* "Have not some had the same wild fancy, that the "*Weigelians* had, That there is a time to come (which they call, "*Seculum Spiritus Sancti*) in which God shall by his Spirit re- "veal much more knowledge and light, than was revealed by "Christ and his Apostles in the Scriptures? Are not most of us still too inquisitive, *When Christ will come in his glory, when* Babylon *shall fall, when the Witnesses prophesying in sackcloth and ashes shall be at an end?* Christs own Disciples were not content with what Christ told them should be, but enquire, *When it should be?* Christ doth indeed give them many signs of the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and of the end of the World; but tells them, *Of that day and hour knows no man, no not the Angells of Heaven, no nor the Son of Man* (as Man) *but my Father only.* This Curiosity was also reproved by Christ, immediately before his Ascen-

Against vain Curiosity.

Deut. 29. 29.

1 Cor. 4. 6.

Rom. 11. 33.

Gen. 3. 5, 6.

2 Cor. 11. 3.

Gilespy's Miscellan. Questions, p. 131.

Caril on Job, 28. 21.

Mat. 24. 2, 3. 36.

Mar. 13. 32.

Acts 1. 7. sion, with, *It is not for you to know the times or seasons, which the Father hath put into his own power*: And the Apostle *Paul* tells the *Thessalonians*, That such knowledge was needless for them: 1 Thes. 5. 1. *But of the times and seasons, Brethren, you have no need, that I write unto you.* Even good men have sometimes a stronger desire to *know* the *times*, than to *redeem* the *time*. Hath not the knowledge of many lain in canvasing *foolish and unlearned questions*, 2 Tim. 2. 23. which the Apostle bids *Timothy* to *avoid*, *because they tend to strife?* O! take heed of this sin for the future. It is a great Vanity. *Man is vain* (saith one) *when he would be wise beyond* Caril on Job 11. 12. *his line, or in things above him, not in things about him, or fit for him.* It is a sin that we are naturally prone too. *Man naturally* Those that pry into the secrets of *Princes*, may fear what *Actæon* met with; and those that pry into the secrets of *divine mysteries*, what *Pentheus* met with. Bacon: *Sapientia veterum*, Sect. 10. *desires* (as the same Author well observes) *forbidden wisdome*, and his desire is seven times stronger after it, as it is *forbidden*, than as it is *wisdome*. This is a sin very provoking unto God: To pry into, *arcana imperij*, the mysteries of their government is so unto Princes. No wonder that God hath been *a consuming fire* to us, seeing we have been so bold and daring *Phaetons*. Vain Curiosity is a presumptuous transgression: take heed of continuing guilty thereof any longer: for the future be wise *unto sobriety*. Though *the secret of the Lord be with those that fear him*, yet they, that fear him, will not, dare not, meddle with, nor search into his secrets. Take heed of breaking open of Gods Cabinet, entring into his Counsels, prying into his Ark once more: beware of suffering your imagination to wax wanton, and run riot, yea mad about crotchets, and meer niceties any more; take heed of *intruding* (as the Apostle speaks significantly to this point) *into things which you have not seen*, yea, *which cannot be seen*, being *vainly puft up by your fleshly mind.* There is (saith the same judicious Expositor) *flesh* in the *understanding*, as well as in the *will* and *affections* of man; and in the *flesh*, there is *pride*, and it is pride, that makes men so busie and bold; so boldly busie, as (un-ask'd, yea forbidden) to intrude into such things. O! say now with *David*, *Lord, mine heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty, neither will I exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high for me.* Such are things not revealed: they are not only *high things*; but above the lawfulness of mans search: they are tearmed not *incomprehensible*; but rather ἀνεξιχνίαστα, things *not to be enquired into. Who is able to open the Book?* Who, *but the Lyon of the Tribe of* Judah?

Caril on Job 28. 21. Col. 3. 18. Psa. 131. 1. Rom. 12. 16. Rom. 11. 33. Rev. 5. 2.

The

The best of Gods Saints are so unfit to *expound* the *contents* of the Book, wherein the mysteries of Providence lye coucht, and infolded, that they may not so much as *untye* the *clasps*. A bold enquiry here, is not more *irreverent*, than full of *danger*. When men walk on *steep* places, they are subject to *fall*: so here, by medling with *high things*, an *errour*, yea *heresie*, is quickly *incurred*.

Genus quasi sacrilegæ temeritatis est, ut plus scire cupias, quam sinatis. Salis.

2. *Ignorance*. I do not say, take heed of *Nescience*, of not knowing those things, which you are not *bound* to know, or have not *means* to know; in the former Section I have cautioned you against such *science*: But beware of *Ignorance*, of not knowing what you *ought* to know, and what you *have means* to know. Hath not this been your sin? Hath not *Jesus Christ* come in *flaming fire* against this sin? O that it may be your sin no more! What! Is it yet nothing to you, that your Souls should remain as *Lanthorns* without *Candles* in them? Is it yet nothing to you, to want *eye-sight*, to have *blind Souls*? to have the *Gospel* still *hid* from you, as so many *lost* Souls, *blinded by the god of this world*? Have you no mind as yet to be freed from *Satans slavery*? *Satan* doth indeed sometimes *transform himself into an Angel of light*; but he alwayes loves to dwell in a *dark house*, in an ignorant Soul: Though his Name be Δαίμων, and he *hath* much knowledge himself, yet he *hates* and *hinders* knowledge in man: He knows, he hath none more *fast*, than those that lye in the dark Dungeon of Ignorance, *bound* in the *chains* of *darkness*. Is it nothing to you, to continue still *stark naught*, without any goodness in your hearts? As the *mind* is, so is the *man*. *Without knowledge, the heart is not good*. For any to say, Though I am *ignorant*, yet mine *heart* is *good*, is as if one should say, Though I am *blind*, yet mine *eyes* are *good*. Those that had the *leprosie* in the *head*, were to be judged *unclean*. Is it nothing to you, still to remain *useless unto others*? Is it nothing to you, to be even in such times as these, without an interest in God, *strangers from the life of God through ignorance*, so as none of Gods offers of himself do yet prevail with you? Is it nothing to you, to continue *prepared for ruine*? *The people that understand not*, shall not only *stumble*, but *fall*, *i. e.* totally perish. O ye *ignorant* Professors! *the great day of Gods wrath* is coming, and how will ye *be able to stand*? *O that you would yet know the things, that belong to your peace, before they be hid from your eyes!*

Against Ignorance.

Eph. 4. 18.
2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.
Goodwins Evangelical Communicant.
Δαίμων q. δαήμων, *Inarus, peritus.* Leigh. *crit. sacr.*
Prov. 19. 2.
Eph. 4. 18.
Hos. 4. 14.
Rev. 6. 17.
Luc. 19. 42.

Againſt Errour.

3. *Errour.* Take heed not only of *not apprehending*, but of *miſ apprehending* God, and the things of God. Hath not this been your ſin? Have not your apprehenſions concerning God been very erroneous? Have not ſome Profeſſors thought, That there is no God, nor Devil, nor Heaven, nor Hell, but what is within us; and that ſin and grace were equally of God, and agreeable to his will? O! *Be not* alwayes *deceived* concerning the *Providence* of God, his *Worſhip*, his *Miniſtry*, his *Houſe*, his *Diſcipline in his houſe*, &c. Is it nothing to you, to be under the *Gentiles* heavy and dreadful *Plague*, to be given up to *a reprobate mind*, a mind *void of judgement*, a mind *diſallowed*, *rejected*, and *abhorred of God*; a mind *that all have cauſe to be aſhamed of*? Is it nothing to you, to *ſuffer loſs* in Gods *refining fire*? Is it nothing to you, ſtill to entertain that *whoriſh woman*, that hath *caſt down* many, *wounded* many, yea *ſlain* many, many *ſtrong* men, many *great* men, many *learned* men, yea many *profeſſing* men? Is it nothing to you, to be ſtill in danger of Gods ſending upon you *ſtrong deluſions*, or (as the *Greek* hath it, ἐνέργειαν πλάνης) the efficacy of errour, *that you ſhould believe a lye*, the lye of lyes, *viz. Popery, that you may be damned?* Ah Souls! Can you ſeriouſly conſider theſe hints, and thoſe you have in the *Goſpel-glaſs*, *chap.* 9. and not dread, and ſtand upon your guard, againſt every Errour in Religion? True *hatred* is to the *whole kind*. It is ſad to *frown* on *one* Errour, and to *ſmile* on *another*. *Gideon* had *ſeventy* ſons, and but one *baſtard*, and yet *the baſtard deſtroyed all the reſt*. One turn may bring a man quite out of his way. *Ah Lord!* (ſaid one) *this mercy I humbly beg, that thou wouldſt rather take me, and do any thing with me, than to give me up to thoſe ſad Errours, to which thouſands have married their Souls, and are in a way of periſhing eternally.* O! *Do not erre, my beloved Brethren.* Take heed therefore of *pride*, of that *proud Curioſity* I have already cautioned you againſt. *The meek*, or humble (as the word ſignifieth) *will he guide in judgement, the meek will he teach his way.* The ſame Author tells of a man, who, ſeeing in a Viſion many *ſnares* of the Devil, ſpread upon the earth, ſate down muſing, and ſaid within himſelf, *Who ſhall paſs through theſe?* Whereunto he heard a voice anſwering, *Humility ſhall paſs through them.* To *perſiſt wilfully* in *Errour* is *Diabolical.* It were *beſt*, we never erred; *next to that*, that we amend our Errours.

Brook's Satans wiles.

Rom. 1. 28.

1 cor. 3 11, 12, 13, 14, 15.

2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Judg: 8. 13.

Jam. 1. 16.

Pſa. 25: 9.

Take

Take heed of being *contentious* againſt the truth, and *diſobedient* to the truth, when made known unto you: yea take heed of a voluntary *ſluggiſhneſs*, and an affected *lazineſs*, as to *ſearching* out of *Truth*, which cannot but *expoſe* a man to *Error*; for Truth doth commonly keep ſo much State, as not to reveal her ſelf to any, but thoſe who ſtudiouſly ſeek her. Take heed alſo of *Covetouſneſs*. In a word, be careful to ſubdue all your inordinate affections; for they are of great force to ſway the Judgement. Rom. 2. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 10.

4. *Unteachableneſs.* Take heed of unwillingneſs to get *clear* and *right* apprehenſions of God. Hath not this been your ſin? Have not you been not only *ignorant* and *erroneous*, but *unwilling* to be inſtructed? Have not you been not only *deſtitute of*, but *oppoſite to*, the ſaving knowledge of God? Light hath been offered; but have not you ſhut your eyes againſt it? And if ſome light hath broke in upon you, you have *not liked to retain God in your knowledge*. Have you not wilfully *rejected knowledge?* and hath not *God* therefore *rejected you?* Have not you *caſt off* the *knowledge* of God, with *contempt*, and *deſpite*, as the word ſignifyeth? Have not you *caſt off* the *means* of knowledge? And hath not *God* therefore *took away* the *means* of knowledge? Have not you thought, that you muſt buſie your heads about ſome other matters; and that you may do well enough without this knowledge, if you do but know how to trade, and to mannage your worldly buſineſſes? Have not you *rejected* the knowledge of that Truth eſpecially, that ſhould have brought you to the true worſhip of God, as thoſe Prieſts did the knowledge, that they muſt worſhip God at *Jeruſalem*, for fear of loſing their eſtates? Hath not God therefore, in an extraordinary manner, rejected you? So much is noted (thinks *Tremellius*) by the redundancy of a letter in the word for Gods rejecting, not found elſewhere in all the Scripture. *Have not you even ſtudied to be ignorant of God?* Have not you therefore been for *unteaching Prieſts*, and *humane inventions*, in the worſhip of God, which kept out of the Land of *Iſrael* the knowledge of God? No wonder that *God hath a controverſie with the Land*, no wonder that God is contending with *Engliſh* Profeſſors in a way of judgement; no wonder if there be *no peace in* England, *to him that goeth out, and cometh in, but great vexations upon all the Inhabitants, God vexing us with all adverſity:* Againſt Unteachableneſs. *Aliud eſt neſcire, aliud nolle ſcire.* Rom. 1. 19. Hoſ. 4. 6. See *Bur.* on the place: *Burroughs* on Hoſ. 4 1. 2 chron. 15. 3. 5.

sty: So it was with *Israel* in the like case, *Israel was without the true God, i. e.* the true worship of God, *and without a teaching Priest, and in those times there was no peace, &c.* No wonder that *God hath made us to see*, seeing *we would not see*: No wonder that *God is departed from us*, seeing we have said, at least in our hearts, *Depart, for we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes.* Your *Ignorance* hath *much* incensed God against you; but your *Unteachableness* much *more*. O! *acquaint now thy self with him.* I beseech you *now*, *now* that the hand of God is out against your selves, in some kind or other; *now* that the hand of God is much heavier upon others; *now acquaint your selves with him*; *now or never*; *now*, or else he will not *be at peace* with you, and *good will* not *come unto you.* Let it not alwayes be said, *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness.* O! unto *reading* and *hearing*, add *praying*, that you may not only be *Book-taught*, but *God-taught*. You need not *ascend up into Heaven, to bring Christ down from above, nor to descend into the deep, to bring up Christ from the dead*, that you may be acquainted with him; *the Word is nigh you*, which being read, heard, and prayed over, will give you that *knowledge of God and Christ*, which *is life eternal.*

Isa. 26. 11.

Job 21. 14: see Brinsley on Job 22. 21.

Psa. 82. 5.

Rom. 10. 6.

John 17. 3.

Against resting in a Form of Knowledge.

5. *Resting in a Form of Knowledge.* The word signifieth the *shew*, the *appearance*, the *Image* of Knowledge. Hath not this been your sin? Have not you affected the *reputation* of knowledg, more than the *reality* of knowledg? Hath not the *Name* been better esteem'd by you, than the *Thing*? Have not you satisfied your selves with *a dark and confused knowledge*? Hath not your *light* been *darkness*? *The wisdome from above is pure*, and therefore *clear* and *distinct*. Have not you satisfied your selves with *a sapless knowledge*, without the *savour*, that is in saving knowledge? *Knowledge* in Scripture doth connote *affection*; and that, which carrieth not the heart and affections with it, deserveth not the name of Knowledge; and therefore those, that did not *like* and *love* God, are said, *not to know God.* Have not you satisfied your selves *without an experimental knowledge* of God, of the exercise of his Power, Wisdome, Goodness, Mercy, *&c.* for your eternal welfare, in working effectually upon your hearts, by his Word and Spirit? Have not you satisfied your selves with an *unactive knowledge*? To have *notions* according to *Knowledge*, and *actions* according to *Ignorance*, is to be *bruitish* in

Rom. 2 20. Μορ'φωσις, Εἴκων, *Hesyc. Swidas.*

Jam. 3: 17:

2 cor: 2: 14:

It is tearmed by the schoolmen, *sapida scientia*, or *scientia justus*: Isa: 1: 3:

Jer: 10: 14:

in knowledge. Have not you ſet up your reſt, in ſuch a knowledge as is ſhort of making men live *peaceably*, *humbly*, *obediently*, and *believingly*, as ſaving knowledge doth? This kind of knowledge, is but *a form of knowledge*, without the *truth*, *ſubſtance*, and *reality* of knowledge; as *a form of godlineſs*, is the *appearance* of godlineſs, *without the power of godlineſs*. The knowledge of God doth not conſiſt in a few *barren notions* concerning God, which do not render us *better* in our lives, or *liker* unto God. *He knew no ſin*, in *Paul*; is in *Peter*, *He did no ſin*. *To depart from evil, is underſtanding*. *They have a good underſtanding, that do his Commandements*. *Joſiah* was ſtrict in performing his known duty, And *was not this, to know me*, ſaith *the Lord?* Such as do not *awake to righteouſneſs*, (the *Greek* is *awake righteouſly*) *i. e.* that do not give their minds and endeavours to righteouſneſs, they *have not the knowledge of God*. Have not you ſatisfied your ſelves, *without knowing God in and through Chriſt*? Here let it be minded, that the Object of that Faith, that is required in the firſt Commandement, in all its acts, both *direct* and *reflect*, *inward* and *outward*, is God in Chriſt, or intereſt in God in and through Chriſt. The Deity, Father, Son, and Spirit, is the *ultimate* Object; but Jeſus Chriſt, God dwelling in fleſh, is the more *immediate* Object thereof. Chriſt *leads* us by the hand, and we are ſaid *by Chriſt to believe on God, that our Faith might be in God*. But have you ever had a *real* and *intuitive* ſight of Jeſus Chriſt in his glory, not only from *report*, nor only from his *works*, nor only from the bare *letter of the Word*, but from the *Spirit*? Have you ever beheld ſuch a glory in Chriſts perſon, as hath cauſed you to eſteem him in all his glory, as your *preſent*, *greateſt* and *only* good? Hath God ever given you *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jeſus Chriſt*? If not, you muſt repent of your *Knowledge* under the notion of *Ignorance*; and be ſure, that for the future you be reſtleſs after a *clear*, *diſtinct*, *ſavory*, *experimental*, *active* Knowledge of God *in Chriſt*.

2 Tim: 3: 5:
Verba notitiæ connotant affectum & effectum.
Job 28: 28:
Pſa: 111: 10:
Jer: 22, 16:
1 cor: 15: 34:
T: Goodwin's Chriſt let forth, p: 10:
Eph: 2: 18:
1 Pet: 1: 21:
Shepheard on the parable of the Virgins, *p:* 74, 75, 202, 203, 204:
2 cor: 4: 6:

6. *Not growing in Knowledge.* Is not *ſaving* knowledge a *growing* thing? Were not the *riſings* and *increaſings* of *the waters of the Sanctuary* a *type* thereof? But alas! have not the beſt ſet up their reſt in low attainments of ſaving knowledge? Have not ſome conceited themſelves taught by God *immediately*, by the *Spirit*, and needed not any of Gods *mediate* teaching, by the

Againſt not growing in Knowledge:
Ezek: 47: 3, 4, 5:

the *ministry* of man, or by the *Scriptures*? As for such, whatever knowledge they pretend to, the truth is, they are altogether without the saving knowledge of God. *As he* (a saith one) *who thinks himself so good, that he cannot be better, was never so good as he should be: So he that thinks he knows so much,*
1 cor: 8: 2: *as he can learn no more, from the Scriptures and Ministry, knows nothing as he ought.* As for those, that have the beginnings of
John 17: 3: *life eternal*, in the knowledge of *God*, and *Jesus Christ*, certainly it hath been their great fault, that they have not made conscience of growing in knowledge daily; both of getting the knowledge of more *duties*, and of more *sins*; and more of the *goodness* of those duties, and of the *evil* of those sins, which they knew already, as they ought How seldome have Sermons been attended for this very end? How seldome have Ministers been consulted with for this very end? *Doth not your not growing in grace evidence, that you have not grown in knowledge*? The
2 Pet: 3: 18: Apostle puts both together; *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*; to hint to us, that in proportion to our spiritual growth in knowledge, is our growth in grace. *Is not your neglect of growing in knowledge, evident in your decayes in knowledge*; not seeing so much *evil* in *sin*, especially such and such *particular* sins; nor so much *good* in *duty*, especially such and such *particular* duties; nor so much *beauty* in *truth*, especially such and such *particular* truths; nor so much *deformity* in *errour*, especially such and such *particular* errours, as formerly. No wonder that God deals with us, as he hath threatned to deal with them, that know him not. No wonder if God seem to resolve, that this generation of *English* Professors, shall not enter into the promised *Canaan*; *They were those that had not known Gods wayes, to whom the Lord swore, that they should not enter into his rest.* To prevent this, let us all be stirr'd up, to *conform* more and more *to Jesus Christ*, who
Luc: 2: 40: *grew in wisdome*, as well as *in stature*. Let us write after *Paul's*
Phil: 3: 12, 13, 14: copy, *Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend, that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus: Brethren, I count not my self to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth to those things that are before, I press toward the mark, &c.* Would you have God take away all your talents? Take heed then of neglecting to increase

increase them. *Then shall yee know, if yee follow on to know the Lord. The path of the just is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more, till it be perfect Day.* "He (saith one) that "hath the *least* saving acquaintance with God, hath enough to "make him *thankful*; but he that hath the *most*, hath not e-"nough to make him *idle*. Hos. 6. 3. Prov. 4. 18.

7. *Neglecting to make use of Knowledge.* Hath not this been your sin? Hath not the habit of knowledge layn dead in your Souls? Hath it not been an useless and an unprofitable thing, both as to your selves, and others? O that it may be your sin no more! Be not satisfied with having Lights, or Lamps, but *Let your Lights be burning*, or shining. Make use of your knowledge, *for the heating of your affections*, for the stirring up *desires* after God, *love* to God, *delight* in God, *hatred* of sin, *fear* of offending God, &c. As the Spouse, *He is altogether lovely: This is my Beloved. Let the knowledge of wisdome be unto your Souls, as Honey, that is good, and the Honey-comb, which is sweet unto the taste.* Make use of your knowledge *for the guiding of your thoughts words and actions. Let wisdome guide* you in every step you take. Ask of your knowledge continually, what saith the Rule? what doth the Word of God require? Make use of your knowledge *in bearing witness to truth, for which you came into this World.* When you come to appear for an opposed truth, let not your knowledge be to seek. Make use of your knowledge *for the preserving of your Souls from theoretical and practical miscariages. Seeing yee know, &c. beware lest yee also be led away with the error of the wicked.* If you will make use of your knowledge, you have Gods promise for preservation from *snares* in judgment, and *defilements* in practice. The Devil shall not *undermine* you by *policy*, nor *overcome* you by *power*. Make use of your knowledge *for the good of others*. One great *end* of knowledge is to *communicate* knowledge. And indeed (as one well observes) *to know for our own and others good is the only good knowledge.* To *reject* the *directions* of knowledge, as well as the *means* of knowledge is to *reject knowledge*. And hath not *God* therefore *rejected* you? Is not God reckoning with his *wicked*, because *slothful* servants, for letting their Talents lie un-improved? Yea, is not this a greater judgment than any outward judgments you are under? Is it not an evidence of a Souls being under a *spirit of slumber*, to have no more use of its knowledge, then one

Against not making use of knowledge.

Luc. 12. 35.

Cant. 5. 16.

Prov. 24. 13, 14

Prov. 6. 22.

John 18. 36.

2 Pet. 3. 16. Prov. 2. 11, 12, 16.

Bur. on Hos. 4. 6

Isa. 29. 10.

asleep hath? *Not to use* is all one as *not to have* knowledge. *He that hath not, i. e.* that doth not make use of what he hath, *shall have what he hath, or seems to have, taken away from him.*

Chap. II. *The miscarriages opposite to Believing God: The Assenting Act of Faith.*

Against credulity. *Prov.* 14. 15. *Mar.* 4. 24. *mat.* 7. 15. *Jer.* 23. 16. *Mat.* 8. 15.

1. VAin *Credulity.* Hath not this been your sin? Have not you been so *simple* as to *believe every word*, pretending to come from God? *Have not you been ready to hearken to false Teachers?* Though God hath said, *Take heed what you hear: Beware of false Prophets: Hearken not unto the words of the Prophets, that prophesie unto you, they make you vain, they speak a Vision of their own heart: Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod*; yet how *fool-hardy* and venturous have you been? O the sad consequences of this fool-hardiness! *Eve* lost all by hearing *one* Sermon from the mouth of the *Serpent*. *Julian* the Emperor, sipt in his *Apostasie* by hearing *Libanius*, the Sophister. Let others, yea your own harms, make you to beware. O! come not any more neer the door of their house; *Knowest thou not that the dead are there, and that their guests are in the depth of Hell?* Say not, you must *try all things*; Christians ought indeed to *prove all things* in the Apostles sense; the Doctrines, that Christs own Ministers teach them, they must bring to the touch-stone of the Word; But he that will adventure to tast of every box and glass in an *Apothecaries* shop, may sooner meet with *poyson*, than with *nutriment*. *Have not you been ready to receive and reject Doctrines, before you have brought them to the touch-stone and ballance of the Sanctuary, to be tryed?* Before you receive or reject a piece of gold, you will go to the *touch-stone*, to try whether it be good *mettal*, or no, and to the *ballance* to try whether it be *weight*, or no; But have you not deale otherwise with the Doctrines you have heard? Hath your *ear tryed the words*, that have sounded therein? The Original word for an ear (as an excellent Expositor observes) being of the *dual* Number, signifieth *a pair of ballances*, to note, that *we should not only hear, but weigh.* But *have not you received Doctrines upon trust?* Have not some given an *absolute credence* to the *Church*, to a *Synod*, to a *Councel*? Have not others to this

Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula, &c. *Prov.* 9. 18. *1 Thes.* 5. 21.

Cyril on Job 12. 11.

and

and the other *singular person*, if a *learned* Man, or a *pious* Man, if a *Pastor*, or a *Teacher*, especially, if pretending the *spirit of Revelation*? But what saith the Apostle? *We beseech you, brethren, that yee be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by* word, *nor by* letter, *as from us*; not by *spirit*, those that pretend *prophetical revelations*; nor *word*, those that plead *traditions*; nor *letter*, those that urge *forged records*. It was the *Bereans* commendation, that they would not trust *Paul* upon his word, but *tryed* his *Doctrine* by the *Scriptures*. *Have not you also rejected Doctrines upon trust*? It is as dangerous (saith one) to *refuse*, as to receive, what we have not *examined*. No wonder that we, that have been so ready to *inslave* our *consciences* to Men, be given up to so soar a bondage. *They shall be his servants, that they may know my service, and the service of the Kingdomes of the Country*; *i. e.* That they may know the *difference* between them: the *bondage* of the one, and the *liberty* of the other. O that this may be your sin no more! why should ye be any longer willing to be the *servants of Men*, seeing *one is your Master, which is Christ*?

2 Thess. 2. 2.

Acts 17. 11.

2 Chron. 12. 8.

Shephard's wholesome caveat for a time of liberty. p. 3.

Ash on 2 Chr. 30. 8.

1 Cor. 7, 23. mat. 23. 10.

2. *Sinful Incredulity*. The assenting act of faith is a full perswasion of any truth upon a divine testimony. The *Hebrews*, the *Greeks*, the *Latines* express it by such words, as import *believing*, or *giving credit to*. Many think all *Infidels* are without the *pale* among *Turks*, and *Heathens*; But alas! are not too many found in the *bosomes* of *Churches*? The *Israelites* were Gods people, and yet *destroyed* in the Wilderness, because *they believed not*. And may not we fear destruction for our unbelief? *Are not we still guilty of not believing that God is, what God is, and what God saith*? One well observes, that *all sin comes from Atheisme*; *for who would sin, did he then verily believe, that there were a God, that saw all, and would punish all? And such a God, God must be, or no God: And all sin tends to Atheisme; for sin wipes out all the notions of a Deity, as much as it can: And when we are in sin, we must be either willing to get out of it by Repentance, or else we shall be willing to turn Atheists*. *Guilt* always (saith another) begets *fear*; and *fear*, *hatred*; and *hatred* strikes at the *being* of the *object hated*: as is evident in *Malefactors*, desiring there were no *Law*, nor *Judge*. Do not we *say* in our hearts, *there is no God*? so the *fool*, the sinner doth. Is Atheisme (saith one) when Men do but in their hearts say, that it is all vanity which is spoken of God,

Against Incredulity.

האמין

Πιστεύειν

Credere, fidem habere, testimonium accipere.

Capel of temptations, page 153, 154.

Bates on Heb. 11. 6. in M. E. at G. page 52.

Godolphins holy Arbor, page 17

Are not we still guilty of *not believing what God is?* Do not we *deny*, if not *expressly*, yet *consequentially* Gods *absolute dominion* to command us: the *goodness* as well as *righteousness* of the law of God, by which we ought to be ruled: that he is the *rewarder of them that diligently seeke him*, and the *avenger* of his *adversaries*; that *he sees our thoughts afar off*, and that our greatest *secrets are naked and open to, anatomized, and dissected before*, his eyes: that he is *good*, yea *the chief good?* Are not we still guilty of *not believing what God saith*, which of us is yet fully perswaded that our losses for Christ shall be made up with the hundred fold in this life; because he hath said, *Verily, there is no Man that hath left House, or Parents, or Brethren, or Wife, or Children, for the Kingdome of Gods sake, who shall not receive manyfold in this present time: He shall* (according to *Matthew*) *receive an hundred fold?* Which of us yet believes that God will repay what ever we lay out for his poor servants, because he hath said, *He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth to the Lord, and that, which he hath given, will he pay him again?* Which of us yet believes, that if we will be Christs witnesses, none of the World will cordially love us; because he hath said, *yee shall be hated of all Men for my names sake?* Which of us yet believes that all *Hells* and the *Worlds* hatred can do a Child of God no hurt, because he hath said, *Blessed are yee, when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsly for my Names sake?* We are indeed apt to beguile our selves and others, in professing that we receive Gods testimony in all that he speaks; but the Apostle tells us, there is a *denial of God in works*, as well as in *words*: and certainly denial in works is the strongest denial, and manifests that our affirming what God saith in words is but meer *hypocrisie*: that we do but *flatter God with our mouth, and lie unto him with our tongues.* Are not we still guilty of neglecting to get our hearts more and more established in believing that God is, what God is, and what God saith? Is not this a lamentation, and should it not be for a lamentation? should we not mainly repent of our *unbelief*, seeing it is not only the *provocation*, but the cause of all our other provocations? No wonder that God hath shamed the throne of our glory, seeing we have rob'd God of his glory by our unbelief? What is Gods declarative glory, but his reputation in the World? Unbelief takes away Gods reputation,

Luk. 18.29,30. Mat. 19,29.

Prov. 19. 17.

Mat. 10. 22.

Mat. 5. 11.

Tit. 1. 16.

Psal. 73. 35 compared with v. 40,41.

Hagg. 3,8.

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it makes him of no credit in the World, it *makes him a lyar.* By *unbelief* we attempt to make *the faith of God, i. e.* his faithfulneſs, *of none effect.* O! repent, repent that God, who is *no debtor* to you, who was *never worſe* then his word, hath ſo little credit with you, who profeſs to be his *ſervants*, his *children*, his *ſpouſes*. No wonder that we are kept in the *Wilderneſs*, yea in a manner *brought back* into *Egypt*: We may thank our unbelief for ſhutting us out of *Canaan*. *They could not enter in becauſe of unbelief.* No wonder that Gods promiſes, the only ſolid grounds of comfort in times of tryal, do not, cannot, comfort us: alas! they have no credit with us. We *faint*, becauſe we *believe not.* O that this ſin may be your ſin no more! *Take heed, brethren, leſt there be in any of you* for the future *an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God*, and thereby God be provoked to depart further and further from you, until he hath left you *totally and finally.*

1 John 5:10. Rom. 3. 3. Heb: 3: 19. Pſal: 27: 13. Hebr: 3: 12.

3 *Unſetledneſs in Religion.* Hath not this been your ſin, yea, is it not ſtill your ſin? Who *believes without wavering*, without any fear leſt the contrary ſhould prove true? Are not you troubled with a *Vertigo* in your *Heads*, a *giddineſs* in your *underſtandings*? Have not ſome thought *ſcepticiſme* very tollerable? Hath not the Apoſtle ſaid, *ſtand faſt in the faith: Be eſtabliſhed in the faith, as you have been taught, &c. Beware leſt any ſpoyle you through philoſophy and vain deceit: be not ſoon ſhaken in mind?* And yet have not many been for an *Academical* and *Pyrrhonian* demur and dubitation concerning Scripture Revelations? Have not more been actually *carried about*, as *wheels*, as *chaff*, as *waves*, as *clouds*, *with every wind of doctrine*? Have not you *turned round*, as *wheels*, with the *times* and *places*, where you lived? Have not you been *up* and *down*; now of *this* mind, then of *that*, embracing and following thoſe opinions, and ways, which the times have ſmiled upon? Have not you been *whirld about* by the *times*, as *chaff* by the *wind*? Have not you been *wavering*, *as a wave of the Sea*, which is never ſtanding ſtill, if there be any wind ſtirring? Have not ſome of you been carried quite round about the Card and Compaſs, as the *Clouds* of the Aire are from one quarter of the Heaven to another? Have not you been thus *carried about with divers and ſtrange Doctrines*, with Doctrines *differing* from the truth, and *ſtrange* to the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament? Are not you yet uneſtabliſhed, yea, are

Againſt unſetledneſs.

1 Cor: 16: 13: Col: 2: 6, 8. 2 Theſ: 2: 2.

Brimley's ſpiritual Vertigo: p. 9, 10, 11, &c.

Jam: 1: 6.

Hebr: 13. 9.

not you careleſs in ſeeking after eſtabliſhment? Are not you ſtil even indifferent whether you *pray* to God to eſtabliſh you, as *David* did, yea, or no? Whether you *enjoy the Sacrament* of the Lords Supper (that *heart-eſtabliſhing Ordinance*) duly adminiſtred, yea, or no? Whether you *continue fellowſhip* with eſtabliſhed Chriſtians, yea, or no? Do not you ſtill *ſtagger* at the *promiſes* of God, *viz.* that *God will be a Sun and a Shield, and no good thing will be with-hold from them that walk uprightly:* that *Babylon is fallen, is fallen, i. e.* ſhall as certainly fall, and that utterly, as if ſhe were ſo fallen already: that *there ſhall be a reſurrection of the dry bones, &c.* Do not you ſtil *diſpute* the promiſes in your thoughts? Do not you ſtil doubt whether God will be as good as his word, and that becauſe of the difficulties that lie in the way? All *ſtaggering* at the promiſes of God is from *unbelief. He ſtaggered not at the promiſe of God through unbelief.* Is not this alſo a matter of juſt and deep Lamentation to ſee ſo many Profeſſors, ſome of which were formerly looked upon as ſober and ſtayed Chriſtians, now *reeling* and *ſtaggering* (like *drunken* Men) *to* and *fro*, carried *this* way, and *that* way, as the *wind* blows? ſhould any of you, whilſt your ſelves ſtand ſafe upon the ſhore, ſee others though *ſtrangers*, much more if *friends*, *toſſed* upon the *waves*, among *rocks* and *quick ſands*, ready to periſh every moment; might it not be preſumed, that it would affect, the flintieſt heart among you? and can you ſee the *ſouls* of your *brethren* and *ſiſters* thus *toſſed* to and fro without any *trouble* to *your own* ſouls? But alas! who ſtands faſt and ſafe upon the ſhoar? Are not all your hearts unſetled? And what! will yee not pity your own unſtable ſouls? Is it nothing to you, to be under *Reubens* reproach? *Unſtable as water, thou ſhalt not excel. A double-minded Man is unſtable in all his ways.* Are not you in danger of being utterly ruined in *this hour of temptation, that is come upon all the World, to try them that dwell upon the Earth?* Are not you in danger of being *ſpoyled*, of being *made a prey?* O! your unbelieving ſtaggerings grieve the heart of your Lord. The Holy Ghoſt, ſpeaking of the unbelieving *Jews*, tells us, *Jeſus was grieved for the hardneſs of their hearts*: And ſhall they not grieve your hearts? It is a wonder that God hath ſpared you ſo long. *O faithleſs and perverſe Generation! How long ſhall I be with you? How long ſhall I ſuffer you?* O! *ſin no more* in this kind. O that *henceforth* yee *be no more children toſſed to and fro,*

Rom: 4: 20: *Brinſley, &c. p: 98:*

Gen: 49: 4: Jam: 1: 8:

Col. 2. 8. *Ne ſit, qui vos depradetur. Beza in loc.* mar: 3: 5:

fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lye in wait to deceive! Eph. 4. 14. Brinsley, &c. 206, &c.
O! Be not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines for it is a good thing, that the heart be established with grace. Be restless, till the *Word come unto you in much assurance:* Be restless, till you have attained *unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mystery of God,* &c. Seek heart-establishment from God, for your selves and others, as *Peter* doth, *Now the God of all grace,* &c. *make you perfect, stablish, strengthen you:* And *David, Stablish me with thy free Spirit.* Neglect neither the *Word,* nor *Sacrament,* administred after the right order. *O! Forsake not the assembling of your selves together, as the manner of some is. Trees* stand surer in the *Wood* or *Grove,* where they have company, than in the *Field,* where they stand alone. Hebr. 13. 9. 1 Thes. 1. 5. ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ Col. 2. 2. 1 Peter 5. 10. Psa. 51. 12. Hebr. 10. 25.

4. *Resting in a Dead Faith.* Hath not this been your sin? Have not you satisfied your selves with a Faith, that is but the carkass of saving believing? The Apostle, in making mention of a *dead faith,* alludeth to a *corps,* or a *dead plant,* which have only an outward *similitude* and *likeness* to those which are *living. Saving belief is an assent wrought in the Soul, by the sanctifying Spirit, and built upon a Divine Testimony.* But is not our belief, the *effect* of natural *reason,* further *enlightned* (at most) by the *assistance* of the *Spirit*? Do not we remain *unsanctified,* notwithstanding our believing? *Whosoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God.* Have we any further assurance of what we believe, than that which Reason suggests? Were ever the things believed, evident to any spiritual sense within us? *Faith is the evidence of things not seen.* Is not our belief grounded only upon an *humane* testimony? *We call that a Divine Testimony,* (saith *one* of the *Western* Worthies) *which is given by the Spirit of God, to that Spirit which is within a regenerate person. For* (saith he) *unto any testimony two things are required;* First, *The manifesting and presenting that which is to be credited or believed.* Secondly, *An ability in him, to whom it is witnessed, to understand it; otherwise the proposing any thing by discourse to a beast, that wants reason to understand speech, or the relating of any thing to a man, that hath reason, in the* Greek *tongue, who understands no language but* English, *is no testimony, no more than it is to a deaf man, that cannot hear: Wherefore, to make a Divine* testimony, Against resting in a Dead Faith. *Manton* on *Jam.* 2. 17. *White's* Directions, p. 91, 92, &c. 1 John 5. 1. Hebr. 11. 1. *White,* &c. p. 95, 96, &c.

teſtimony, there muſt be both Gods teſtifying unto man, and alſo a mind in him able to underſtand that Revelation. Firſt, *The Spirit of God muſt reveal and manifeſt unto a man that Truth, that is to be believed, as the light diſcovers any viſible object*: Next, *There muſt be in that man, a light planted in his heart,* (*which the Apoſtle calls,* An underſtanding to know him, that is true) *as the light or viſual-faculty is planted in the eye, or elſe he cannot comprehend that light, that ſhines unto him.* —— *The evidence then, which a true believer hath of any truth of God, which he embraceth, is the manifeſting of that truth unto the Spirit, not only by a form of words, to the natural underſtanding, but beyond that, by a kind of demonſtration unto the ſpiritual mind; as the evidence of any object to the eye, is by the ſhining of the light upon it, which makes it to appear to be ſuch as it is. This kind of teſtifying, or evidencing things, in a ſpiritual way, the Apoſtle calls,* The witneſſing of Gods Spirit, with our Spirit, *mentioning expreſly two Spirits, whereof, if either be wanting, there can be no Divine teſtimony.* But is not our *belief grounded* upon the *teſtimony* of *Reaſon*, upon the conſonancy of Scripture-revelations to right Reaſon? And is not the teſtimony of *reaſon* an *humane* teſtimony? Yea, Do not we believe upon an humane teſtimony, when we believe any thing written in the Scriptures, for the *teſtimony* of the *Scriptures*, If that we believe the Scriptures themſelves, upon the *general conſent of the Church*, or *upon the probability and reaſonableneſs of the things therein delivered*, or *upon the obſervation of the truth of thoſe writings in moſt things*, which all make up but an *humane* teſtimony? This the ſame learned and judicious Divine proves thus, "The aſſent unto one thing for "another, is built upon that, to which we firſt give our aſ-"ſent: as a ſtone in a wall, though it lyes immediately upon "that ſtone, that is next under it, yet it is indeed ſupported "by the foundation, which bears up all the building. We ſay, we do *believe*; but is not our Aſſent *without ſutable impreſſions upon our hearts*, and *without a ſutable carriage in our lives*? Doth the *reality* of Gods being believed, make us look upon our ſelves, and all things, as *nothing without God*, as *nothing in compariſon of God*; and to let the *beeing* and *reality* of our *love, deſire*, and *endeavours*, be let out upon the moſt *real* and tranſcendent *Beeing*? Doth the belief of Gods *Unity*, contract and *unite* our ſtragling affections, and call them home from *multi-*

1 Jo: 5: 20:

Rom: 8: 16:

White, &c: p: 98, 99:

Baxter's Divine Life, on John 17: 3:

farious

serious Vanity? Doth the belief of Gods *Immensity* and *Incomprehensibility*, fill our Souls with *admiration*? Doth the belief of Gods *Eternity*, draw our Souls from *transitory* to *eternal* things? Doth the belief of Gods *Simplicity*, make us in *love* with holy *simplicity*? Doth the belief of Gods *Invisibility*, make us mostly *esteem and value things invisible*? Doth the belief of Gods *Immutability*, beget in us *unchangeable resolutions* for God? Doth the belief of Gods *Almightiness*, fill us continually with *holy fear*, and promote *trusting* in him? Doth the belief of Gods *Wisdome*, make us *delight in the wisdome which is from above*, and to *choose God* for our *Teacher* and *Counsellour*? Doth the belief of Gods *Goodness*, fill our Souls with a *superlative love* unto God, and *industrious desires* to be *conformed to his goodness* in our measure? Doth the belief of Gods *Holiness*, cause us to have most high and honourable *esteems* of *holiness* in the *creature*, and to fall in *love* with it, and wholly *conform* our selves to Gods holiness in Christ? Doth the belief of Gods *Truth* and *Faithfulness*, make us *resolved for duty, and an holy life*, seeing the *commands* of God are *serious*, and the *promises* and *threats* true? The true and sound assent to any Divine Revelation, as an holy truth, includeth a correspondency in the believer, to the thing believed: Such an assent descends from the *understanding* to the *affections*, and so to the *conversation*. *True* Faith, and *right* Obedience, cannot be separated; for he that believes the truth of Gods promises, fill'd with such things as he doth most want, must needs desire the good contained in them; and seeing God hath declared the effect of his promises, attainable only in wayes of obedience, if he neglect that means, it is manifest he doth not desire the end. Certainly, if our assent doth not, cannot act, no more than a dead body can rise and walk, it is but a *dead faith*. The Apostle doth not say (as one well obserues) *Faith is dead without works*, but *Faith without works is dead*. There is a difference between these predications, as there is between those, *A man without motion is dead*, and *a man is dead without motion*. *Works* are not the *cause*, that *give* life *to* Faith; but yet they are the *effects*, that *argue* life *in* Faith. *Faith* is not alwayes alike *lively*; but yet it is alwayes *living*, and *operation* is the *necessary effect* of *life*. O! What cause have we to *repent* of our *dead* Faith? And what! Shall it alwayes remain dead? Take heed, I beseech you, not only of

Manton on Jam: 2: 20:

setting up your rest in a *Knowledge*, but in a *Faith*, *falsely so called*. Take heed of pleasing your selves any longer with the *name* of Faith, and remaining destitute of the *vertue* of Faith, for the *crucifying* your lusts and corruptions, and *conforming* your *hearts* and *lives* to the Commandements of God. To *assent* to *truth*, with the *neglect* of *goodness*, or with *lazy desires* after goodness, is but a *vain Faith*. That assent that doth not now *subdue sin*, will not *suppress fear*, when you come to dye. Ezek. 23. 4. What! will ye not yet *bury your dead out of your sight*?

Chap. III. *The Miscarriages, opposite to Consenting to have God to be your God, the third Act of Faith.*

Against refusing God.

1. REfusing God. Beware of still refusing to have the true God to be a God *unto* you, and a God *over* you; to have him to be your *Portion* and *Soveraign*. To be *God*, implies to be *enough unto all*, to be an *all-sufficient* and *self-sufficient* good: and to be *over all*, and *above all*, to be an *all-commanding* good. To refuse God, is to refuse *to place our happiness in him*, and *to come under his government*. Hath not this been your sin? God hath offered himself to be your *chief good*, and *absolute Soveraign*; but have not you refused such offers? Yea, do not you still refuse them? *There are many degrees of refusing* (as one well observes:) Although we may be free of some of them, yet are not we comprized in some one or other of them? Are not some guilty of *refusing* by way of *presumptuous persecution*? Are not others by way of *malicious opposition*? Are not others by way of *scornful derision*? Are not others by way of *open* (though not malicious) *resistance*? And if we be not guilty of any of these refusings, yet are not we guilty of refusing by way of *dissent*, or *unpersuasion*? Are not we yet unperswaded to accept of God upon his own termes? Certainly there is no *medium* 'twixt *Faith* and *Infidelity*: 'twixt *receiving* of God, and *refusing* of God. *He that is not with me* (saith Christ) *is against me*. He, that doth not *accept* of God, doth *refuse* him. That *Chapman*, that will *not take* your Wares at your price, in so doing, he doth *refuse* them. That *Woman*, that *dissents*, that will *not consent*, that such a man should be her

Gen. 17. 1, 7. Rom. 9. 5. Ephes. 4. 6.

Ob. Sedgwick's Fountain opened, &c. chap. 6.

her Husband, *refuseth* to marry with him. Are not you still unperswaded to have God himself for your *Portion*, to place your *happiness* in him, and *absolute Soveraign*, to come under his *government*? Is not this evident in the remaining *deafness* of the *ears* of your Souls? Not to *give ear* to, or not *to obey* the Word of the Lord, is *to reject* it; and to reject the *Word* of God, is to reject *God himself*. *My people would not hearken to my voice, and* Israel *would none of me.* Were you ever yet *effectually called?* Did God ever yet speak in such a voice, as could not but be heard, as could not be withstood? If yet your ears are deaf unto the calls of God, if yet you are able to withstand the voice of God, certainly you do still refuse him. Do not your *hearts* remain *obdurate*? Do the offers of God make any impression on them? Is any savour of God to be found in them? Alas! Gods offers do not move or stirr them cordially to desire the enjoyment of him, and subjection to him. Do not our *worthless thoughts of God* still continue? Do not we still think, that God is not worth so much *pains*, so many *prayers*, so much *hearing*, so much *time*, so many *sighs* and *tears*, &c. Alas! which of us accounts *Gods offers* the *best bargains*? *That which a man counts to be his best bargain, he will* (saith the same Author) (1.) *Make all things to give way to that* (2.) *Make that to fill up his desire.* (3.) *It will draw forth his choicest diligence and pains.* (4.) *He will be at some loss to gain it.* (5.) *He is peremptory, and unmoveably earnest for the enjoyment of it.* (6.) *The fruition of it presents unto him the sweetest joy.* Do we thus account closing with God best, *Best of all*? Where then are our *present cares* to get God himself? Where are our *strong fears* lest we miss of God? Where are our *full desires*, and *peremptory* and *stedfast resolutions* to be the *Lords*, as well as to have God to be *ours*? What will we *part* with for God? Whence comes in our *sweetest joy*? *To them that believe*, *i. e.* receive Christ, or rather God in Christ, *He is precious*, Christ is precious, and God in and through Christ is precious. But where is the *precious thought*? Who are *restless without God*? To whom are *Goods not good* without God, *Peace not rest* without God, *Life not a being* without God, *all nothing* without God? *Give me children, or else I dye*, said *Rachel*. Dost thou say, *Lord, give me thy self, or else I dye*? O that this may be your sin no more! Yet consider, and be wise: O! Do not still

Lam. 3. 24. *Portio cujusq; dicitur in quo felicitatem suam quisq; collocat.* Calv.

Psa. 81. 11.

O. Sedg. &c. p. 301, 302.

still stand out against him: Though you refuse his *Ministers*, yet do not any more refuse their *Master*: Though you like not the *messengers*, yet do not any more dislike the *offers*. What shall I say, to perswade you; or rather, whereby God himself may perswade you? If you will continue still resolute, that God shall not be *a God to*, and *over* you: verily, God will resolve, that you shall not be a *people*, but *he will make an utter end of you*: yet *in the midst of judgement, he remembers* so much *mercy*, as once more to offer himself unto you, notwithstanding all your former refusals of him; and if now you will but accept of him, all that is past shall be forgiven you, and God will receive you into his grace and favour, and never any more upbraid you with your often refusals of him: *Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins* (your refusals of God in Christ, of such sins the Apostle speaks in that place) *may be blotted out*: But if you will not, how can you read without trembling, that Word of the Lord, *If we sin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgement, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries?*

Jer. 3. 1, 5. Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return unto me, saith the Lord. — Will he reserve his anger for ever. Acts 3. 19. Hebr. 10. 26.

Against closing with God hypocritically.

2. *Closing with God hypocritically.* Beware lest your willingness to have God for your God, still prove a consent not suited to the object of Faith, in its absolute necessary respects and nature. "It is essential to God, as the object of mans Faith, "(saith a Worthy) to be his supreme Lord and Rector; and "his ultimate end, and chiefest good: and so must be apprehended and willed by all, that indeed take him for their "God: As also to be perfect in Being, Wisdome, Goodness, "and Power, and of perfect Veracity: yea, it is essential to "the object of our Faith, as such, to be considered comparatively: As that God be taken, not only as our Good, but "our chief good, to be preferr'd before every creature: that "he be taken, not only as our Lord, but as Soveraign Lord, "to be obeyed before all other. —— Where these essentials "are not in the apprehension of the object, there is not truly "Consent, or Faith. —— Consent hath relation to the Offer: and if it be not the offered thing, that is consented to, "but somewhat else, under that name, then it is not indeed "Consent, for there is no Relate without its Correlate. —— "The Civil Law saith, *Ignorantis non est consensus*; A God that "is

Baxter's Apology, p. 62, 63.

"is inferiour to Creatures in Rule, or Goodneſs, and De-
"fireableneſs, is not God indeed: And therefore, he that
"takes God in this ſenſe for his God, takes but the Name of
"God, an Idol of his own brain, and not God himſelf.
Hath not this been your ſin? Is it not ſtill your ſin? Do not you ſeem to conſent, when you do not indeed and in truth conſent? You pretend, you are heartily willing, that God ſhould be your God, and that you do conſent to have him. But?

First, *Are not you ſtill ignorant of the true God, whom you ſay you conſent to take for your God?* Ignorant Profeſſours can only ſeem to be Conſenters: And are not you ſtill ignorant Profeſſours? See *Chap.* 1. Ignorantly.

Secondly, *Are not you for having of God, without rejecting of other gods?* Indeed, had our hearts been always *chaſt* and *faithful*, we ſhould not have needed to *break*, we ſhould only have *tyed* a *knot*; but becauſe of our former wanton dalliance with, and engagements unto *other lovers*, we muſt ſolemnly renounce and diſclaim them, or God will not be ours. *Hearken O Daughter, and conſider, forget alſo thine own people, and thy father's houſe: ſo ſhall the King greatly deſire thy beauty.* But, *Do not you ſtill refuſe to renounce the World for your chief good?* Do not you ſtill *ſay* in your hearts and deſires, *Who will ſhew us*, who will give us to enjoy, *any good*, the good of the creature, an earthly happineſs? Do not you ſtill ſay in your hearts, *Take God for a portion, who will, ſo we may have our portion in this life?* Was not he guilty of blaſphemy, that ſaid, He would not part with his part in *Paris*, for a part in *Paradiſe?* And are not your hearts guilty of the ſame? Do not you ſtill place your happineſs, either in *riches*, or *honours*, or *pleaſures?* Do not ſome cry out, *Let us enjoy our pleaſures, and we matter not God and Heaven*; *yea, we matter not wealth or honour?* Do not others cry out, *Let us get riches, and we matter not grace and glory*; *yea, we matter not honour or pleaſure?* Do not your *earneſt deſires* of *having*, *carking cares*, and *anxious endeavours* for the *procuring*, *inordinate delight* in the *enjoyment*, *diſtruſtful fears* of *loſing*, and *repining ſorrows* for *parting* with, *this Worlds good things*, ſpeak out plainly, that you ſtill place your *happineſs* in the *creature?* *Do not you ſtill refuſe to renounce all other Lords?* Are not ſome ſtill reſolved to be ruled by the *Devil*, to *be* what he would have them be, and to *do* what he would have them do? Without rejecting other Gods.

Teates Scripture-*Map* of the wilderneſs of ſin, and way to *Canaan*, P. 338.

Pſa: 45. 10, 11.

Other chief goods.

Pſa. 4. 6.

Hæc tria pro trino numine mundus habet.

Populus mihi ſibilat, ego mihi plaudo.

Other Lords.

Eph. 2. 3: Ἀπειθείας

do? Are none of you *Children of disobedience?* The original word imports, *Children unperswadable.* Are not some still unperswadable by any Arguments to reject Satans injections and counsels? Are not others still resolved to be ruled by the *world*, the *things* of the World, the *men* of the World? The World shall *cut out* their *work*, and *choose* their *imployments*, yea their very *Religion*, and set *limits* to it: Mens *opinions*, *precepts*, *practises* shall be their *rule* and *standard.* Are not others still resolved to be ruled by *themselves*! to continue their own *Lords*, *consulting* only *with flesh and blood*, doing only what is good in their own eyes, as that People, who cryed out, *We will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth of our own mouth; for then we had plenty of victual, and were well, and saw no evil: but since we left off, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword.* But what saith Christ? *No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other: or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other: Ye cannot serve God and mammon.* Verily, you cannot be *ruled* by the *flesh*, or the *World*, or the *Devil*, and by God too.

Jer. 44. 17, 18.

Mat. 6. 24.

Without yielding up self unto God.

Thirdly, *Are not you still for having God to be yours, without an hearty willingness to be the Lords?* Verily you will finde it, that it is not enough to think or say, *I am none of Satans*, I am *not for the World*, I will *not* be for the *Flesh*: thou must come to say heartily, *I am Gods*; I am, and through grace will continue Gods, and *none but Gods.* We must not only *leave* our *former lovers*, but we must *return* to our *first husband.* What is this (saith one) but the *marriage-match*, and in the truest sense, the *true-lovers-knot?* But alas! can each of us say, *I am thine, save me?* I am not *mine own*, not the *Worlds*, not *Satans*; but *thine*, thine *really*, thine *totally*, thine *solely*, thine *everlastingly*; *save me.* Are not you still unwilling that *all* you *are*, all that you *have*, all that you can *do*, and all that you can *endure*, should be the *Lords*? Are not you still unwilling that your *minds* should be his to *apprehend* and *believe* him? Your *consciences* his, to *accuse*, or *excuse* you according to his pleasure? your *memories* his to *retain* him? your *wills* his to *yield* and *submit* to him? your *hearts* and *affections* his to be *employed* about *him* and his *concernments*? your *eyes* his to *behold* his *works*? your *ears* his to *hear* his *word*? All your *senses* his, to be *casements* and *inlets* to his *goodness*? your *members* his to be *weapons of righteousness*? your *being* his to be

Hos. 2. 7.

Teare, &c. p. 339.

Psal. 119. 94.

Roberts of the Covenant. fol. 94, 95.

be *only for him*? Are not you ſtill unwilling that all your *credit, pleaſures, riches, time, parts, gifts, priviledges, relations*, &c. Should be *Homagers* unto God? Are not you ſtill unwilling that *all you can do* ſhould be either for *publiſhing*, and *maintaining* his *truth*, or *promoting* his *worſhip*, or *protecting* his *Church*, or *advancing* his *Kingdome*, or *fulfilling* his *will*? Are not you ſtill unwilling to *bear Chriſts reproach*, to undergo *tryals of cruel mockings, and ſcourgings, bonds, and impriſonments*; if need be *to be ſtoned, ſawn aſunder, tempted, ſlain with the ſword, to wander about in ſheep-skins and goat-skins, in Deſerts and in Mountains, and in Dens, and in Caves of the Earth being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented* for his ſake? *To reſiſt even unto blood, fighting againſt ſin*? Is not this ſtill the language of your hearts, *Let us break his bands aſunder, and caſt away his cords from us*? Which of us doth yet *yield* himſelf *unto the Lord*? The genuine conſtitution of the *Hebrew* phraſe is, *Give yee the hand unto Jehovah*. Are not you ſtill unwilling to *ſtretch out* your *hands to God*, to be take your ſelves to God in prayer? Are not you ſtill unwilling to yield *obedientiall ſubjection* to Gods *government*, as they *ſubmitted themſelves* (or gave the hand) *unto Solomon the King*? Are not you ſtill unwilling to enter into Covenant with God to be his (which in Scripture is called *giving the hand*, and *ſtriking hands*) according to the Directions in the late famous *Vindication of Pietye*.

Heb. 13. 13, 36, 37, 38

Hebr. 12: 4.

Pſal: 2: 3.

Aſh on 2 Chron. 30. 8. Job 11: 13: Iſa: 1: 15: 1 Chro. 29. 14. Ezek: 17: 18: *Prov.* 22: 26:

Fourthly, *Is not your willingneſs to have God forced, and not free?* Properly indeed every *conſent* is *voluntary*; but yet that may be called an *involuntary* conſent, when the will, might in uſe its own liberty with ſafety, would not conſent, though at preſent it doth. Such a conſent doth a *Marriner* give to caſt his goods over-board in a Storm. God *wooes* and *wins* hearts; he doth not *raviſh* them. Indeed at firſt they are not only *coy*, but *crooked*: *He comes to his own* (in this ſenſe, even his *own intended*, and *elect Lady* and *Spouſe*) *but ſhe receives him not*. What gracious heart is there, but with bitterneſs remembers how often it refuſed *God*, before he brought it to a *yea*, and *Amen*? *God* only of *unwilling* makes them *willing in the day of his power*. But alas! are not you ſtill forced to be willing to have him, rather then to be damned? Did you ever look after *God*, but in a ſtrait? Have not *ſin*, and the *World* been your only *delight* in *good* days? and *God* your *deſire* only in *evil* days? In your *extremities God* ſhall

Forcedly and not freely:

Teate, &c: *page* 337:

pſal: 110: 3:

Ob: ſeld: &c: ſinut: open: go *pag:* 303, 304.

for a Number; but in your prosperity he shall stand only for a cipher. Verily involuntary consents are false, are none, are indeed real refusings.

Defectively and not fully: Texte, &c: page 338:

Fifthly, *Is not your willingness to have God defective, and not full?* Right consenting is not only a *free*, but a *full* act of the will. *A divided heart* never yet consented indeed to have *God* for its God. Surely that Christ, that God in Christ, that will not allow *one man to serve two masters*, will never allow *one woman to have two husbands*, especially if himself must be one of them: But alas! though you may not place your happiness *altogether* in the *creature*, yet are not you still for placing some *part* of your happiness in some *created* good? Though you be not altogether for being ruled *only* by *Satan*, or the *World*, or the *Flesh*: yet are not you still unwilling not to be ruled in the *least* by any of those Lords? Are not you still unwilling to become *fully* the Lords? Is there not some *one thing* in your selves, in the World, that you stick *for*? God can prevail with you for all, but *one thing*, in that he must yield unto you. Is there not some *one thing* in God that you stick *at*? you *like Gods mercy*, and his *love*, and his *graciousness*, and his *happiness*: but is there not some *one thing* in God that you *like not*? Do not you *mislike* either his *holiness*, or his *justice*, or his *anger*, and *wrath* against sin? Are you sure that you like his *Rule*, and *Authority*, his *Spirit*, his *All*? Alas! in *this*, or in *that*, you cannot like him, you cannot come up to him: you are content to *part* with *this*, and to *leave* that; to *do* this, and to *suffer* that; but you cannot yield up *all* unto God: you will part with *some* sins, yea with *all but one*: you will forsake *much* of the World, but not *all*. Is not your consent accompanied with some one *exception* or other? you will have God, that with him you may enjoy such a lust, or so that with him you may have such a kind of life: so that for him you may not hazard your name, and credit, or your liberty, or livelihood, or your very life. If it be thus, verily you do but pretend to consent: your *seeming consent* is a *real dissent*. This one difference between God and your souls, will keep the breach between you from being made up, and condemn you for Refusers of him. No *bargain*, no *match*, can be made where there is *one exception*.

Ob: Sedg: &c: pag: 302, 303:

For the future, and not for the present:

Sixthly, *Are not you only willing to have God for the future, and not for the present?* Do not you delay to close with God, as your chiefest

chiefeſt good, and ſupreameſt Lord? Do not you pauſe on Gods offers, and put him off for the preſent? Hath not *God* your *preſent denial*, but the *Fleſh*, the *World*, and the *Devil*, your *preſent Embracements*? You take the *preſent time* to *pleaſe* the *Fleſh*, to *enjoy* the *World*, to *gratify* the *Devil*; but you do *not* take the *preſent time* to *enjoy God*. O Sinner! what is it that thy Heart doth at preſent chooſe and cleave unto? Is it not ſomething *ſinful*, or *worldly*? Do not ſome of you ſee a more preſent good in your Luſts, than in God? Do not others ſee a more preſent good in the World, than in God? Are not you ſtill guilty of *trifling delayes*? Do not you ſay to God as *Felix* to *Paul*, *Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient ſeaſon I will call for thee*? A *conſent* for the *future* is no other than a *preſent diſſent*. It is indeed a moſt contemptible refuſing of God, when we do not judge his offers even of himſelf to be our chief good, and ſupreameſt Lord, worthy of *acceptation*; of *all* acceptation, of all acceptation *for the preſent*.

O. Sedg. &c. pag. 281. Acts 24. 25.

Seventhly, *Is not your willingneſs to have God temporary, and weak, and not habitual, and prevailing*? It is not (ſaith one) what thou art in a fit, or in a fright, or in a ſudden paſſion, in ſickneſs, or under the apprehenſions of death, that will give thee any certain Light, by which thou maiſt judge of thy ſtate, but what thou art in the ſtanding and abiding diſpoſition and bent of thy Soul. He, that hath indeed conſented to have God for his God, abides willing, is never unwilling (when he is himſelf) to be rid of Sin, the World, and the Devil, and to place his Happineſs in the enjoyment of God, and being under his government: To be ſure, his willingneſs abides greater than his unwillingneſs. But alas! Are not you only willing to have God in Fits and Moods? Do not you remain habitually unwilling? Is not your unwillingneſs greater than your willingneſs? Right willingneſs (ſaith the ſame Author) will diſcover it ſelf to be prevailing by bringing forth both *Reſolution* & *Reſiſtance* againſt Sin: Where a man is truly willing to be rid of Sin, he will not only be patient, and give God leave to Crucifie all his beloved Luſts, and darling Corruptions, and give the Word leave to hew and ſtrike home at the root of them, without hiding them, or warding off the blow, or wiſhing they may be ſpared to him; but ſtands ſtedfaſtly on Gods ſide, and taking part with him againſt, reſolves to uſe

Temporarily and weakly. *Allens* Vindication of Godlineſs. *pag.* 276, 277.

all his means for the conquering and overcoming of them: And this resolution will bring forth resistance, a restraining, curbing, and withstanding of Sin in all its Workings. But were you ever thus resolved against the Flesh, the World, and the Devil, and for God? Do you yet thus resist all Temptations to the contrary?

Renouncing God.

3. *Renouncing of God.* Hath not this been your Sin? Even since you have consented that God should be your God, have not you cast him off? Have you not returned with the *Dog* to the *Vomit*, and with the *Sow* to *wallow* again in the *Mire*? Have not you *returned* to your *Former Lovers*, and to be again in subjection to those other Lords, that have had absolute dominion over you? If you have not rejected God *directly* and *intentionally*, yet have not you rejected him *consequently* and *implicitly*? Thus *Saul*, in sparing *Agag*, and the fat Beasts of the *Amalekites* against Gods express commandment, is said to have *Rejected Gods Word*, & therefore God himself. *Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being King.* Have not you with deliberation, for the gaining of somewhat that pleased you, done that which is indeed casting off of God? Which of you can say, *Our heart is not turned back, neither have our steps declined from thy way, though thou hast sore broken us in the place of Dragons, and covered us with the shadow of Death? Oh! if we have forgotten the Name of the Lord, or stretcht out our hands to a strange God, shall not God search out this?* Have not you lifted up your *heel against* God, after you have lifted up your *hand unto* God? Hath not God threatned to *renounce you*, because you have *renounced him*? to *deny you*, because you have *denied him*? O! be at length perswaded to *remember from whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your first-works*; and for the future, *with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord*: i. e. (as one well observes) as you have *made* a good choice, so still to *stick* to your choice. Never more refuse God, as the Stomach is said to refuse such meat, as, because of its contrariety to its appetite, it vomits up again.

Award's Souls misery and recovery, &c. *page* 134.

1 Sam. 15. 23.

Psal. 44. 18, 19, 20, 21.

2 Tim. 2. 12.

Rev. 2. 5.

Acts 11. 23.

Antipharmacum Salubervimum. p. 6.

Now that you may not only heartily *mourn* for, but carefully *take heed* of, even *virtual*, as well as *formal* refusals of Gods offers of himself unto you to be your God, consider seriously what *provocations* all kinds of refusals of God are unto his Majesty? Must it not necessarily *incense* him, that you should (as it were) tell him you will have none of his *Mercy*, none of his *Love*, none of *Himself*; you had rather enjoy the *World*, yea, your

your *lusts*, which *dishonour* and *grieve* him so much? Hath not God said, *Wherefore* (speaking of this very sin) *my fury hath been poured forth, and kindled in the Cities of* Judah, *and in the Streets of* Jerusalem, *and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day?* Yea, may you not fear, that God will let you *fall* in this *hour of temptation*; yea, give you up unto your own hearts lusts, to commit all manner of wickedness? *Israel would have none of me: so I gave them up unto their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own counsels.* Jer. 44. 4, 5. Psa 81.11,12.

Chap. IV. *The Miscarriages opposite to Trusting in God, the relying Act of Faith.*

1. *Tempting of God.* *Tempting* is the same with *trying*: to tempt God, is to make tryal of some Divine perfection *unlawfully*. There is indeed a *lawful* making an experiment of God; *Try me now in this, saith the Lord of Hosts.* This tempting or trying, is an Act of Faith, leading us to obey and practise those things, which God hath commanded, with expectation of that fruit and blessing, that God hath promised: But there is an *unlawful* making experiments of God. And hath not this been, yea is not this still your sin? Is not your *proving God*, an evidence of your *tempting God? Your Fathers tempted me, and proved me.* Do not you still make unlawful experiments of Gods power, whether he can do such and such things? *They tempted God in their heart —— they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness?* Do not you still circumscribe Gods power, and set bounds to it at your pleasure; so that if God do not this or that, which you have a mind to, he shall not be accounted Omnipotent? *They —— tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel.* Do not you still do such and such things, in the most secret manner possible, to try whether God seeth what is done in secret, or no? *They tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?* Do not you still refuse to make use of the ordinary means God hath appointed, trying whether he will provide for you extraordinarily? This Christ calls *Tempting the Lord.* Do not you still murmur and repine against God, and his Instruments, trying whether he will be angry? *Tempting Christ, and murmuring,* are made *Synonima's.* If you do not still tempt God *directly* and *intentionally*, yet do not you

Against Tempting God. *Amesij medull.* l. 1. c. 12. Mal. 3. 10. Psa. 95. 9. Psa. 78.18,19. Psa. 78. 41. Exod. 17. 7. Mat. 4. 7. 1 Cor. 10. 9, 10.

still tempt him *consequently* and *implicitely*? Do not you still do that, which of it self, and in its own nature, tends to try, either Gods *Power*, or his *Omniscience* and *Omni-presence*, or his *Providence*, or his *Justice* and *Anger*, of what mettal he is made? This notion of tempting God, may be farther cleared by considering, what it is to tempt man: *To tempt man, is to desire, and some way to endeavour, to incline him to break that Law, that ought to rule him*: In like manner, *To tempt God, is to desire, and some way to endeavour, to incline him to break that Law, which he hath proposed to himself to follow, in the ruling of the World.* Hence some distribute temptations into two sorts, some of *inducement*, and some of *tryal*; but the former sort may be referr'd to the latter, because the will of God is tryed in them. Thus God is tempted two wayes especially, either *by expecting that God should do what he hath not promised*, or *by expecting that he should not do what he hath threatned*. And do not you thus still tempt God? Do not you still expose your selves to danger, without any urgent necessity, expecting protection from Heaven? Do not you still do what Christ was tempted to by Satan? Do not you still refuse to use the ordinary means appointed by God for your safety, and yet expect that God should even work miracles for your preservation? It is true, when God takes away means of safety from us, then to expect safety immediately from Heaven, is not to tempt God, but to trust in God; for God hath promised to come in at a dead lift: When God affords no means of safety, he will provide for our safety without means, if it be good for us to be safe. *And* Abraham *called the name of the place*, Jehovah-jireh, *as it is said to this day, in the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen*: The *English* of which Text (*which one*), is this, *Mans extremity is Gods opportunity*. When Christ, and his company, were in the *desart*, where no meat was to be had, he fed them miraculously; but in the *City*, he sent his Disciples to buy meat. We may expect *Water out of the Rock*, where there is nothing but Rocks and Stones; but where we may hope to find Water, we must digg for it. When *Elisha* was in a little Village, not able to defend him from the *Assyrians*, he had *chariots and horsemen of fire* to defend him; but when he was in *Samaria*, a strong walled City, though the King of *Israel* sent to fetch his head, he said only to those that were with him, *Shut the door*. Do not some

White on *Mat.* 4. 7.

Gen. 22. 14.

Asa's support for the sinking heart, in times of distress, *pag.* 3.

John 4. 8.

Numb. 20. 11.

2 Kings 6. 31, 32.

some still expect, that God should provide for their Bodies, though they neglect the means that God hath appointed for their nourishment, clothing, recovery from sickness, &c? *Do not some look to eat, though they do not labour?* But do not more expect that God should provide for their Souls, though they neglect the means of grace and salvation? Do not you still think, that your Souls shall do well enough, though you take no pains about them? Do not you lay all upon God, and never trouble your selves about them? Do not you still cry out, *Let us dye the death of the righteous?* But are not you careless of living the life of the righteous? Do not you still expect help from God in sinful wayes? Do not you still expect to meet with God in wayes of worship of your own devising? *Now therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoak upon the neck of the Disciples, which neither our Fathers, nor we, were able to bear?* In a word, (as to this Head) Do not you still do what tends to incline God to make good his *promises*, though you do not perform their conditions? Do not you also still expect, that God should not execute his *threats* upon you, though there be that in you, against which, where e're it is, the threatnings are denounced? Do not you still expect to escape punishments, notwithstanding your very sins are threatned by God in his Word? Do not you still run into temptation? And are not you careless to avoid occasions of sin, and yet remain fearless of falling into sin, though God hath threatned, *to give up such to their own hearts lusts?* O that this may be your sin no more! O! *tempt not Christ* any more, *as you have tempted him.* The naturalness of this sin should make you take heed. This is an humour, that we are all given unto by nature, to be marvellous desirous to try conclusions, that are rare and unknown; to contemn things common, and to be fond after strange novelties. It was told the *Israelites*, as plain as could be, that they should *not reserve of the Manna till morning*; and they needed not to have reserved it, they had fresh every day; and yet forsooth, they would needs keep it, if it were but for an experiment sake, *to try whether it would stink, or no*: And though they were forbidden to gather any on the Sabbath day, and on the Even before had enough for two dayes, and it was told them, they should find none on the Sabbath day; yet they must needs try. This sin should not only be the more lamented, but the

2 Thes. 3. 10.

Acts 15. 10.

Ezek. 14. 3, 4, 5.

1 Cor. 10. 9.

Exod. 16. 20.

more taken heed of, becauſe it is ſuch a provocation unto God. It comes from much wickedneſs. Such an one, that will undertake a new way to know the will of God, is not ſatisfied with Gods diſcovery of his will in his Word: yea this ſin proceedeth from pride and arrogancy, ſuch a ſoul refuſeth to ſubject its will to the will of God, and doth ſeek to make Gods will ſubject to its luſts. This ſin lays you open to all manner of temptations, to any wickedneſs whatſoever: neither are we overcome by any temptation of the Devil, unleſs we do in a ſort tempt God. *The Lord Jeſus ſighed for the* Phariſee *tempting of God*, and why? Becauſe *God ſware in his wrath, that their Fathers who tempted him, ſhould not enter into his reſt.* It is verily height of madneſs to tempt God. To tempt God is to put God to it, and *do yee provoke the Lord to anger, are yee ſtronger than he?* If you will needs tempt, it were beſt for you to tempt your matches. There is no dealing with Fire: it is very dangerous to make experiments thereof: it will burn all, that toucheth it, and God is Fire, yea *our God is a conſuming Fire.*

mar: 8: 11, 12: *Pſal* 95. 11:

1 Cor: 10: 22:

Heb: 12: 29:

Againſt not truſting in God:

2 *Not truſting in God.* The *Hebrews* expreſs this act of faith by a word, that ſignifieth to lean on, or to caſt the weight of ones body, for ſupport or ſtay. *And it ſhall come to paſs in that day, that the remnant of* Iſrael, *and ſuch as are eſcaped of the houſe of* Jacob, *ſhall no more ſtay upon him, that ſmote them; but ſhall ſtay upon the Lord, the holy one of* Iſrael *in truth.* But which of our ſouls do yet wholly rely upon God for the making good of his promiſes, either for the *beſtowing*, or *continuing*, of what is *good*, or for the *preventing*, or *removing*, of what is *evil*? Is not our *not truſting* in God ſtill evidenced in our *ignorance* of God? can God be more truſted than he is known? *They that know thy name*, and they only, *will put their truſt in thee.* Is it not alſo evidenced in our *want of intereſt* in God, by reaſon of our not *aſſenting*, and *conſenting* to him? *Who is this that cometh up from the Wilderneſs, leaning upon* her *beloved?* who can ſuppoſe God to be thy *leaning-ſtock*, if he be not *thy beloved?* May not God ſay with a bitter ſcorn, *who art thou, that leaneſt upon anothers beloved?* How dareſt thou *lay thine head in his boſome*, unto whom thou never yet gaveſt *the heart in thy boſome?* 'Tis *intereſt*, and *only intereſt* in Chriſt, (in God in and through Chriſt) that gives a right to this *act of leaning* upon him. If you ſtill refuſe to enter into Covenant with God, *he is ſo far from calling you to*

Iſa: 10: 20:

Pſal: 9: 10:

Cant: 8: 5:

Teate, &c: page 333, 334:

take

take hold, that *he will even knock off your fingers from holding upon his Covenant*, with *what hast thou to do, to take my Covenant into thy mouth?* If God be thine, if thou believest him, and consents to have him to be thy God, *lean* and welcome, and the more thou leanest, the dearer shalt thou be unto him, *Christ loved that Disciple best, that leaned upon his bosome most*. If thou canst say with Christ, *my God*, thou mayst add, he *shall be my strength*: If thou canst say with *David*, *the Lord is my God*, thou mayst add, *my strength, in whom I will trust*. But if God be not *thy beloved*, thy *leaning* will be counted *wantonness, impudence*, and *presumption*. Is not our *not trusting* in God also evidenced in our *not keeping his way*, the way of his Commandments, and the way of his *Providence*, but *tempting* of him? But of these evidences already in the former *Chapters*, and the *first section* of this. Once more, what else do your *carking cares* and carnal fears argue, but your *distrusts* of God? Trusting in God will not indeed suffer you to be slothfully careless what becomes of you and yours, *he that doth not* endeavour by honest, prudent, diligent care to *provide for his own is worse than an Infidel*: But yet trusting in God would not suffer you to be carkingly carefull for any thing: *Be careful for nothing*: it would free you from all those *cares* that *distract* the *head*, and *divide* the *heart* from other, and better things: yea it would free you from all carnal fears of evil, *though you walk in the valley of the shadow of death*, that is, though you meet with dangers as *terrible* as death, though those dangers *beset* you as the *Mountains* do the *Valleys*, though you be as *neer to death* as the *shadow* is unto the *body*, though there be but *a step between you and death*. But alas! do not your *carking cares* and *carnal fears* either *divert* you *from* duty, as if it were *a vain thing to serve* and wait upon *the Lord*, or else *distract* you in duties, in reading, hearing, praying, meditating, &c. O that this may be your sin no more! Verily if God shall never be trusted in by you, you shall certainly, and for ought you know suddenly, be consumed by him. What said the *Bramble* when chosen King? *Come, and put your trust in my shadow, and if not, let fire come out of the Bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon*. No wonder that *Fire* is proceeded from God to devour the tallest Cedars for their not trusting in him. You should take the more heed of this sin, because of your proneness to it, and because of its being the life and vigour of every sin: all sin is departing

Psal. 50. 10.
John 21. 20.
Isa. 49. 5.
Psal. 18. 2.
Psal. 37. 3.
1 Tim. 5. 8.
Phil. 4. 6.
Ob. Sedg on Psal. 23. 3.
Psal. 112. 7, 8.
Mal. 3. 14.
Judg. 9. 15.

ing from God; and we depart from God only, because we do not trust in him.

3 *Creature confidence*: trusting in somewhat that is not God. Is not this still your iniquity? Do not you still trust in somewhat, either *within* or *without* your selves! *Do not some still trust in their sins? Loe, this is the Man, that made not God his trust, but strengthned himself in his wickedness, you trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon.* Do not you still lay as fast hold of your sins, as a *lame* Man of his *Crutches*? *Do not you hold fast deceit, and refuse to return?* Do not you think that if your *sins* fall, *you* shall *fall?* Do not you think that you cannot *live*, if you should *leave* your *lying, dissembling, cheating, flattering, sinfull compliances* with such, and such? *Do not you still lean to your own understandings?* If you do, *you cannot trust in the Lord with all your hearts: your own wisdome*, your own politick contrivances for your safety, *will pervert you: your wisdome* will appear *foolishness with God*, yea *enmity against God. Do not you still trust in your own hearts*, in your own *purposes*, and *resolutions*, against your sins, and for God, and in your *promises* of what you will do hereafter? *He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool; but he, that walketh wisely, shall be delivered.* Alas! *the heart of man is deceitfull above all things.. Do not you still trust in your own righteousness?* There is no more safety therein to secure you from the wrath of God in his Judgments in this World, than there is to secure you from the wrath of God in Hell. This *Paul* knew, and therefore *he suffered the loss of all things, and still counted them dung, that he might be found in Christ* (as his only City of refuge) *not having his own righteousness. Do not you still trust in the strength, vigour, and health of your bodies?* May it not still be said to thy charge, that *thou dost finde the life of thy hand*, i. e. Thou still imagineſt, that so long as thou art so strong and healthy, thou shalt not want sufficient means to support thee? *Do not you still trust in your Cities, Castles, strong holds?* and yet doth not God tell you, *all thy strong holds shall be like Fig-trees, with the first ripe Figs: if they be shaken, they shall fall into the mouth of the eater? Do not you still trust in your wealth?* It is so hard to *have* riches, and not *trust* in them, that what one Evangelist calls having of *riches*, another *calls trusting in them. The rich Mans wealth is his strong City, and as an high wall in his conceit*, i. e. He conceiveth himself as safe in the midst of his wealth, as if he were in a Tower

Against trusting in any Creature.
Luk. 18. 9.
psal. 52. 7.
Isa. 30. 12.
Jer. 8. 5.
Lye on psal. 62. 8. in *M. E.* at *C.* P. 433, 439.
Prov. 3. 5.
Isa. 47. 10.
1 Cor. 3. 19.
Rom. 8. 7.
prov. 28. 26.
Jer. 17. 9.
phil 3. 8, 9.
Engl. Annot. on Is. 57. 10.
Nahum 3: 12:
prov: 18: 11:

as high as Heaven, he thinks himself past the reach of danger; but he is deceived: *Riches avail not in the day of wrath.* It is true, at sometimes and in some cases money is a *defence or shadow*; but in the day of Gods wrath, money is *but a shadow*, and *no defence. Trust not* therefore any more *in uncertain riches.* Be not once more guilty of this kind of *Idolatry. Do not some still trust in their worldly greatness?* O! *woe to him, that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his Nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil. Do not others still trust in their humane Allies and Assistances?* That they have such Friends and Confederates, so many stout and valiant Men, ready to form Armies, to stand by them? If the *shadow* of such be your *trust*, the *end* of that trust will be your *confusion. An Horse is a vain thing for safety.* And the stoutest Souldiers are but like *an Army of Women* without God. *Do not others trust in Church priviledges*, crying out *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are we?* Such trust but in *lying words.* No wonder that you have God for your foe, and that you are under his curse. What saith the Prophet? yea what saith the Lord by the Prophet? *Cursed be the Man, that trusteth in Man, and maketh flesh his Arme.* No wonder that God is writing *sentences of death* upon all the means of your salvation: God doth sometimes severely chastise his own Children, even to prevent their *trusting in themselves.* O! how carefully should you take heed of this sin, seeing it is such a provocation unto God, it being an *undeifying* of *God*, and a *deifying* of some *Creature*: seeing also it is a sin that may be often committed in a day, yea in an hour: and seeing it is a sin that you are very prone unto? It is very much in the nature of Man fallen (as one well observes) to affect an *absoluteness*, and a *self-sufficiency*, to seek the *good* he *desireth within himself*, and to derive *from himself*, the *strength* whereby he would *repel* any *evil* which he *feareth.* Hereby Satan prevailed to draw Man from God at first; for since, next unto God, every reasonable created Being is nearest unto its self, we cannot conceive how it should turn from God, and not in the next step turn unto *it self*, and by consequence, whatsoever it was in a regular dependance to have derived from God, being fallen from him, it doth by an irregular dependance seek from it self. It is natural for a sinful Creature, who seeketh only *himself*, and maketh him-

prov. 11. 4. Eccl 7. 12. Zeph. 1. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 17. Col. 3. 5. Hab. 2. 9. Isa. 30. 2, 3. Psal 33. 17. Nahum 3. 13. Jer. 7. 4. Jer. 17. 5. 2 Cor. 1. 9. *Reynold* on Hos: 14: 3: fol: 803, 804, 805:

ſelf the *laſt end*, to ſeek only *unto himſelf*, and make himſelf the *firſt cauſe* and *mover* towards that end: Yea, ſo deſperate is the averſion of ſinful man from God, that when he is convinced of his impotency, and driven off from ſelf-dependance; yet when he hath *no horſes of his own* to ride on, yet ſtill he will betake himſelf unto creatures like himſelf: *If* Ephraim *ſee his ſickneſs, and* Judah *his wound*, Ephraim *will to the* Aſſyrian, *and King* Jareb *for help*. Yea, when he hath nothing in the world to turn to, but he is neceſſitated to implore help from God, he will invent wayes of his own to do it. If *Horſes* fail, and *Aſhur* fail, and *Iſrael* muſt goe to God whether he will or no, it ſhall not be to *God that made him*, but *to a God of his own making*. Once more, conſider, you never repent *for* or *from any* ſin, unleſs you repent *for* and *from this* ſin. True Repentance and Converſion takes off the heart from all *carnal Confidence*; either in *Domeſtical preparations* of our own, *We will not ride upon Horſes*; or in *Foreign aid* from any Confederates, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us*: Or in any *ſuperſtitious* and *corrupt worſhip*, which ſends us to God the wrong way, *We will not ſay any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods*.

Hoſ. 5. 13.

Hoſ. 14. 3.

Againſt Hypocritical truſting in God.

4. *Vain Confidence.* Vain, not only in regard of the *object*, truſting in ſomewhat beſide God; but vain in reſpect of its *form*, ſeeing, though it hath (in ſome ſenſe) God for its object, yet it wants the eſſential properties of right truſting in God: I mean, *the truſt of the Hypocrite*, which in *Job* is compared to *the Spiders web*. It's Mr. *Caril*'s note upon the words, *That an Hypocrite hath a truſt like himſelf*: He hath *grace* proper to his *ſtate*; *falſe grace* for his *falſe heart*. And hath not your truſting in God been ſuch as belongeth only to Hypocrites? Is yet your truſting in God fixed and reſolved? Is there yet any ſtrength in it? Truſt, (ſaith the ſame excellent Expoſitor) where it is true, hath a double effect, the want of which, diſcovers the falſeneſs of it in the Hypocrite: *It confirms and ſtrengthens the heart againſt all oppoſition*: And *it encourageth the heart againſt all dangers*. Doth not our truſt fail in both theſe? Are not we ſtill for going on boldly, till we meet with *oppoſition*, and *dangers* threaten us? Will our truſt, though curiouſly wrought, bear any force of battery, or ſtreſs of weather, any more than a *Spiders web*? Are not we ſtill guilty of not truſting in God *at all times*, and *for all things*? As *true Obedience* reſpects *all the*

Job 8. 14.

Command-

Commandements, ſo *true Truſt* reſpects *all the Diſpenſations* of God. A true believer (ſaith one) depends as much in proportion upon God for a piece of bread, as for Heaven: He truſts God in the leaſt, as well as in the greateſt matters. But though we pretend to truſt in God for pardon and glory; yet do not we think it needleſs to truſt in him for food and rayment; either ſuppoſing that we can help our ſelves, or ſuſpecting that God will not ſtoop ſo low, as to help us? When we have a great buſineſs to ſet about, we ſtirr up our ſelves to truſt in God: and ſo we ought; but the ſpiritualneſs of truſt is ſeen, in depending on God, for managing the leaſt buſineſs, performing the leaſt duty, reſiſting the leaſt corruption, and bearing the leaſt burden. As it is the ſame *love* of God, that *ſaveth* us *eternally*, and *preſerveth* us *temporally*: ſo it is the ſame *power* of God, that doth *great* and *ſmall* things for us. Can we yet truſt in God in *all weathers*? Some only truſt in God in *fair weather*, when they are *full*, they can truſt in God for *bread*; and when they are *ſafe*, they can truſt in God for *protection*: And others only truſt in him in *foul weather*; their truſting in God is not of *choice*, but *forced*, and *of neceſſity*; they never truſt in him, but when they have nothing elſe to help them. Are we yet able to ſay, *Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him*: Or, *though he make me alive, I will truſt in him*? "It is a glorious tryal of "truſt (ſaith the ſame Worthy) to ſay, Should God make me "not worth a groat, yet I will truſt him; but it is a greater "glory of this truſt, to ſay, Though God make me worth thou-"ſands, yet I will truſt in him: When we (to ſenſe) have the "leaſt need of Gods help, then to truſt in him, and depend up-"on him, ſhews, that we are moſt ſenſible that we need his "help; for by this, we in one act, give teſtimony to the All-"ſufficiency of God, and to the emptineſs of the creature: by "this we make God all, and the creature nothing at all. Faith "gives a more ſpiritual diſcovery of it ſelf, when it convinceth "us, that we are poor, in the midſt of our abundance, without "God; than when it convinceth us, that we have abundance "in God, though we are poor. Verily, to truſt in God in all eſtates and turns, is proper to godlineſs. Our truſting in creatures ſo much, doth alſo evidence, that we do but ſeem to truſt in God, and that in deed and in truth, we do not truſt in him at all: He that truſts not in God *alone*, doth not truſt in him

Caril on Job 13.15.

at all. Every thing we *joyn* with God, *dis-joyneth* us from God: We can never take hold of God, unless we let goe our hold of other things. Which of us leans upon *whole* God *only*, and that with the *whole* Soul? Well, seeing your trust hath been *the trust of the Hypocrite*, it is no wonder that it hath been *as a Spiders web*: No wonder that *Gods besome* of *purgation* to true believers, hath been his *besome* of *destruction* unto your Trust and Confidence. When the house is swept, the cobwebs are swept away: No wonder that such *sinners* as you, *in Zion be afraid:* No wonder that *fearfulness surprizeth the Hypocrite.* O! as ever you would stand before *devouring Fire*, take heed that your *trust* be not *as the Spiders web.*

Job 8. 14.
Isa. 14. 23.
Isa. 33. 14.

Chap. V. *The Miscarriages opposite to Assurance, the reflex Act of Faith.*

Against want of Assurance.

1. REgardlesness *of getting Assurance:* which is called by some Divines, *Sensus Fidei*, the feeling, or perceiving of Faith: by others, *Flos Fidei*, the very lustre, and eminency of Faith. When God requires all the Acts of Faith, he doth not only require, that we *know* him, and *believe* him, and *consent* to have him, and *relye* upon him; but he requires, that we *know* that we do so. It is true, Assurance is not such a duty, as *concerns all men, at all times*, and *immediately*; it concerns only *some*, and those in an *order*, and *mediately:* Though therefore it is not the sin of *Unbelievers*, not to know that God is their God, for that cannot be known by them; such are not bound immediately to be perswaded of an interest in God, unless we will say, that they are bound to be perswaded of a lye; God being the God of Believers only; yet it is the sin of *Believers*, to let their interest in God to hang hovering, and in dispute. It must be confess'd, that *Gods not evidencing the direct Acts of Faith unto Believers, is not their sin*; for God may refuse to evidence them, out of Soveraignty, or for the *meer tryal* and *exercise of grace*, and not for the Believers sins; but yet, *for a Believer to be regardless of getting Assurance, is his sin*; yea, if God refuse, for any long time, to evidence the direct Acts of Faith, he may thank some sin or other. He that bids us, *Work out your salvation*, and *make your calling and election sure*, would not so

Flickman's discourse concerning the spirits sealing up believers. Page 76,77.

ſo let us be at uncertainties concerning our ſelves, did not we sleight ſome Ordinance, or omit ſome Duty, or give way to ſome Luſt. And is not this your ſin ſtill? Do not you ſtill want that feeling or perceiving of Faith, which is not meerly humane, and ſubject to falſhood and deluſions, but from Gods Spirit, perſwading the Soul, that it doth know, believe, conſent to, and truſt in God, and therefore infallible; for the Spirit can no more *inwardly* perſwade a ſoul of, then he can *externally* bear witneſs to, any thing that is falſe? It is a good rule, laid down by a late worthy in our Iſrael, That *in all the Acts of Faith, whether they be direct, or reflect, the firmneſs and certainty doth more depend upon Gods ſpirit, confirming us, then upon the clearneſs of the Arguments.* But which of us can ſay, that we know infallibly we are believers from Gods ſpirit perſwading us of the truth of our faith? It is true, no Man hath ſuch perfection of degrees of aſſurance in an ordinary way, as that one degree more cannot be added to the former: and yet (as one well reaſoneth) there is not any repugnancy in *aſſerting* an *infallible* aſſurance, and *denying* a *perfect* aſſurance; for I infallibly know that there is a *God*, and that this God is good and juſt, and yet I have not a perfect knowledge of a Deity, or of his goodneſs and juſtice; for in this life we know but in part. Is not your want of aſſurance that *God* is your *God* evidenced ſtill in your "Not being yet above the tormenting fear of death: "not yet deſpiſing the periſhing vanities of this World: not "yet ſlighting the cenſures of the ungodly: remaining ſtill "without an holy boldneſs in prayer: not yet taking comfort "in Word and Sacraments: not yet abounding in praiſe and "thanksgiving: not yet kindly mourning for your ſins, nor "watching againſt them: and not yet diſregarding cavils a-"gainſt the Truth? Is not God contending with you upon this account? God hath often called upon you in the Miniſtry of the Word, to give all diligence to make ſure that you are believers, and that God is your God upon your faith in him; but though *God hath ſpoken in your proſperity, you have not heard:* And is not he uſing his *Rod* to make way for his *Word* to enter into your hearts? Is not he depriving you of all your outward delights, *Cauſing all your deſirable things to periſh at his rebuke*, that they may not hinder you any longer from making ſure, what cannot be taken away from you, that your hearts may not

Burges's Reſinings, &c. *Part* 1. *fol.* 20, 21.

Doolittle in Morning Exerciſe at Cripplegate, *ſerm.* 12. p. 306, 307.

Hickman ut ſupra: p. 135. to page 155.

Jer. 22: 21.

be taken up any longer with other enjoyments, and thereupon want either *time* or *will* to purſue *the one thing neceſſary?* Are not the Childs Babies taken away to make it learn its *Leſſon?* Hath not God made a *Thorn* to grow up with every *Flower*, *the Star Wormwood* to fall into every eſtate you are in, that you may yet at length ſay, it is not good to be ſo buſie to ſecure theſe *bitter-ſweets*, and careleſs of ſecuring an intereſt in the *unmixed* chief good? Is not God bringing you into life-threatning dangers, that you might not only hear with the hearing of the ear, but ſee with your eyes the neceſſity of having your intereſt in God cleared up unto your ſouls?

Againſt careleſneſs to keep Aſſurance.

Non minor eſt virtus, quam quærere, parta tueri.

2 *Careleſneſs of preſerving aſſurance, when gotten.* It was your duty to be as carefull to *keep*, as to *gain*, aſſurance. When you had gained aſſurance, you ſhould have remembred that you took God to be your God, to rule you, and make you happy in the enjoyment of himſelf, not to make you rich and great in this World, and that therefore Gods people being in the hands of the *Midianites*, will not evidence that the Lord is not with them, though *Gideon* ſay, *If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?* You ſhould have remembred that ſincere, not perfect, faith in God, intereſts ſouls in him, and that therefore frailties and infirmities do not diſſolve the union: you ſhould have been very thankfull for *the firſt fruits of the Heavenly Canaan*: you ſhould have been very careful *not to return unto folly*: you ſhould *not* have *deferd to pay your vows unto God*: yea you ſhould have brought forth ſuch fruit after aſſurance, as you either *did* not, or *could* not, before aſſurance. But have not you been careleſs of diſcharging your duty herein? Have not you forgotten the termes of the Covenant you have entred into with God? Have not you been unthankful even for an Heaven upon Earth? Have not you been guilty of wilful Relapſes? Have not you refuſed or delayed to pay your vows? Have not you done as little for God, as you might have done, had the light of his countenance been never lifted up upon your ſouls? And is not God therefore angry with you? Is not he greatly diſpleaſed with you? That is his meaning, when he ſaith, *he hath no pleaſure in ſuch fools.* Hath not he *taken away what you had?* Hath not he deprived you not only of many viſible tokens of his preſence, but of the ſpiritual light of his countenance,

Judg. 6. 13.
Hickman. &c. p. 183. to 193.
Deut. 26 10, 11.
Pſal. 85. 8.
Eccl. 5. 4, 5, 6.
Mat. 13. 12.

nance, that you may more value, and be more chary of, aſſurance, if ever you enjoy it again? And what! ſhall God loſe his end? O! If ever God vouchſafe you any more of the *hidden Manna*, take heed of waſting and crumbling it away: take heed of loſing *the white ſtone* any more: O! maintain the *Oyle of gladneſs* in the *Cruſe*: Be not any more willing to part with thy *ſweetneſs*, thy *fatneſs*, and *pleaſantneſs*: Be never more willing to be *left* to the *courteſie* of a *Wave*: O! never more be *weary* of the *Sun-ſhine*: take heed of being once more *cloyed* with the *cluſters* of *Canaan*, and of *nauſeating* the *Honey comb*. *Culverwell's VVhite ſtone. page 152.*

3. *Remiſneſs in recovering Aſſurance, when loſt.* Hath not this been your miſcarriage? and is not God therefore contending with you? Hath not God deprived you of ſealing-Ordinances; becauſe you had before driven him from his own Ordinances, and were not reſtleſs for his return? Is it not the deſign of God in taking away from you *ſealing-Ordinances* to make you yet ſenſible of the loſs of the *ſealing-ſpirit*, and that you may give him no reſt till he hath returned you both, that the *Winter* may be *paſt*, and *the time of ſinging* may return? Is it nothing to you to be under a ſpiritual *Famine*? Can you now live without the *hidden Manna*? Are you ſtill willing to continue under ſuch a diſmal Cloud, yea to ſet in it? *Againſt Remiſneſs in recovering Aſſurance.*

O that none of the three foregoing miſcarriages may be your ſins any more!

Firſt, *Take heed* therefore *of thinking any more either that aſſurance is not attainable at all, or that it is not tenable, when attained; or that it is not recoverable, when loſt.* Apprehenſions of impoſſibility in either will kill all endeavours, yea deſires after it, becauſe they will kill hope. Though the will ſometimes, being inordinate, may be tickled with a deſire of impoſſibilities, under an implicit condition, yet no hope, whether regular, or corrupt, can reſpect its object under that apprehenſion. It worketh two paſſions moſt repugnant to this Hatred and Deſpair; the one being a proud oppoſition, the other a dreadfull flight from that good, in which the Mind perceiveth an impoſſibility of attaining it. Treaſure up therefore the *promiſes* that God hath made, that Believers ſhall *have, keep, recover* aſſurance; not only that *they ſhall know that God is their God*, but *they ſhall walk in his Light*, and if at any time through their own default they loſe the Light of his countenance, that upon their *Reynold's VVorks fol. 1001.* Ezek. 34. 30. Hoſ. 2. 19. 23.

Repen-

Repentance *he will heal their back-slidings, and love them freely*, manifest himself as graciously as ever. Promises they are of things, as *future*: they are undertaking of good things, which shall come to pass: Now every *future* thing is a *possible* thing.

Secondly, *Take heed of slighting any more the want of Assurance.* Uncertainly, as to the truth of faith, and as to interest in God, is no light evil, it is even an insupportable burden, especially to those that have experienced what an Heaven upon Earth there is in Assurance. Though one may be a Believer, and not know that he is a Believer: and though Assurance after it is gained may be lost; yet verily you have cause to question whether your Faith in God be true, and whether ever you were Assured, if you can carry the want, or loss of Assurance, as if it were no burden, and do not follow after the gaining or recovering of Assurance with unutterable sighs and groans. *Thou hidst thy faith* (saith *David*) *and I was troubled.* It was indeed his *daily* sorrow of heart, yea it was as *death* unto him. It is true, some run into the other extream: they are too much troubled for not gaining, or losing Assurance, looking on their case as desperate, and themselves as guilty of the unpardonable sin, in driving God away from them; but do you take heed of both extreams, not only lest you should be troubled *too much*, but lest you should be troubled *too little*.

Psal. 30. 7. 42. 3, 4.

Thirdly, *Take heed* (not only lest your complaints, but) *lest your requests for the procuring, or preserving, or recovering of Assurance be heartless.* Are you in fears whether you be believers, whether God be your God, especially in such days as these? you should be (as *David* was) *all prayer*: you should even envy your selves the time you are forced to spend in eating and drinking, and sleeping. Never expect to get Assurance at first without such *pantings, as the chased Hart hath after the water-brooks*, without earnest entreaties, and longings of Soul. Are you for the present under the light of Gods countenance? Deprecate heartily an Eclipse. Have you lost your assurance? Desire earnestly from God new stamps and impressions: tell him, though you have lost the *Print*, yet he hath not lost the *Seal*: give him no rest, till he give your soul rest. Read but the Psalms of *David*, penned by him, when he was in desertion, you'l think that he *breathed* out his *Soul* with his *Petitions*. How earnest also was *Heman*? yea Jesus Christ's Agony made him

Psal. 30. 6, 7, 8. 77. 1, 2. 88. 1, 2, 9.

more

more to expresse his earnestnes, than at other times. *Being in an Agony, he prayed more earnestly.* This is one end of Gods present dispensations towards you: *I will go* (saith God) *and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early*; i.e. betimes, with all speed, with care and vigour also, at such a rate as Men are wont to do things in the morning. *If your doubts do not prevail so far, as to make you leave off hearty praying, your hearty prayers will prevail so far, as to make you leave off doubting.* Luke 22. 44. Hos. 5. 15. *Hickman, &c.* page 205.

Fourthly, *Take heed of contenting your selves* (not only with heartless, but *with fruitless complaints*. Some (saith a famous Author) are of a whining temper, apt to fill the ears of all their familiars with sad relations of their mournful case; but there is little else to be found besides complaints: the soul humbleth not himself before God, nor contends in prayer, nor striveth by the Ordinances and holy walking to finde what it always was without, or hath lost. He compares them to the sick man, who lyeth grieving himself, but no way seeking in earnest to help himself; and to *Issachar*, crouching under his burthen. To spend time (saith another) in whining complaints, is more easie and more pleasing to those who have bruised themselves; but to stir up strength, and be doing, is more safe and pleasing to God. I would not (so he goes on) have deserted souls chidden for crying out and roaring: How can they do other, *whose wounds stink, and are corrupt, whose sores run all the night long?* But they must not spend all their time in roaring, but get the broken bones set, and make use of them; so shall they recover strength and rejoyce. *Symmons's deserted Soul's case and cure.* page 446. *Hickman, &c.* page 200.

Fifthly, *Take heed of neglecting any longer any one means of Gods appointment, either for the getting, or keeping, or recovering of Assurance.* The neglect of any one (as one well observes) may provoke God to reject your attendances on him in the other; 'tis also uncertain in which God will manifest himself, and evidence to you the truth of your Faith in him. Sometimes he doth it in *prayer*: sometime in the *reading* or *hearing of the Word of God*: sometimes in *religious holy conference*: sometimes in *receiving the Sacrament of the Lords Supper*: sometimes in *singing of Psalms*. *Hickman, &c.* page 167. to page 173.

Sixthly, *Take heed of remaining any longer lazie and slothfull in the use of the means.* O! yet at length give diligence to make 2 Pet. 1. 10.

your calling sure; *i. e.* your effectual calling, that your faith in God is a full answer thereunto. Assurance both *requires* and *deserves* all diligence. Such is the *darkness*, *deceitfulness*, and *inconstancy* of the *heart*: such is the *malice*, *policy*, and *diligence* of *Satan* to improve it: of so much *consequence* is this *business*, and so *dangerous* is it to be *deceived* herein, that *all* diligence is *little* enough. So *satisfactory* also is this assurance, that no *labour* will be *grudg'd* by those that do believe it. O! *the rather* now give all diligence to put your faith in God out of doubt, because a Day of great trouble is approaching, yea already begun. What have you besides this to oppose to all your troubles here? When it comes to resisting to blood, and giving up all, can you fadge with such work; while your spirits are dubious & cloudy in this point? O my friends! believe it, 'tis nothing but this that can make a Saint tryumph & glory in abasures & tribulations. And little do you imagine how insupportable troubles are, when the spirit is low and dubious in point of interest.

Culverwell's White Stone, page 150, &c. 137, &c.

Antipharmacum, &c. page 42.

See many more particular considerations to humble for laziness and to stir up to diligence herein in Morn. Exer. at Cripple-gate. page 141. 315, 316.

Iisdem alitur quibus digitur.

In particular, *Take heed of being lazie, or any other ways miscarrying in self-examination*. Assurance consists in a reflex Act, and by such workings it is gotten, maintained, and recovered. The main reason why some never *had* Assurance, why others do not *keep* assurance, and why others do not *recover* assurance; is, because they are not *often* enough, nor *diligent* enough in *reflecting* upon the *drift*, & *course* of their *hearts* & *lives*: they do not often enough rightly & throughly compare themselves with the sure marks of true faith in God, laid down in the Word of God. Many will take some little pains to finde out the marks of true faith in God, and some little time they will spend in comparing their hearts with those marks, but they will not continue diligent in this great duty of self-examination, till the matter be brought to some issue; they will not behold their faces in the Glass long enough to beget in themselves a true notion or Idea of themselves, but go away, and presently forget what manner of persons they were. But let it not be so with you any more. Do you make it your business to go through with this work, and therefore *take heed of being mistaken as to what faith in God, and what assurance of faith, is*. Neither make more, nor fewer essentials of faith in God; neither more, nor less, necessary to interest in God, than God hath made. Expect not ordinarily to have assurance of faith wrought, pre-

Mickman, &c. page 120, 121, 122.

served,

served, or recovered by some vocal, or as it were vocal, testimony of the spirit: or as soon as you be assured to be void of all fears, and filled with all joy in believing. *Set not about this work unseasonably*, but when you finde your hearts in the most serious and quiet frame. He that will see his Face in a Glass, must be fixed, and not in motion. *Be still*, and so *commune with your own hearts*! When you are full of dark and black temptations, you are in a mist, and not able to see things aright. The muddied Water is not fit to give the true shape of the Face. *Hearken not to what carnal reason, and Satan say for, or against your interest in God.* Before faith in God, carnal reason and Satan use their utmost strength to perswade Souls of the goodness of their condition without Faith, thereby to prevent the entrance of Faith, and their seeking after it at all, as not needfull to interest them in God: After faith in God is wrought, and erected upon the ruines of all Satans strong holds, and the Souls carnal reasonings, Satan and carnal reason, in revenge of such an overthrow, muster up new Forces to perswade the Believer by all the Objections, they can raise, that it doth not believe aright, that its faith is not saving. *Take heed therefore of self-love, and sinful jealousie, and prejudice upon either account, when you sit about this work.* As self-love and self-flattery bribreth and setteth carnal reason to plead for the interest of Unbelievers in God; so when once faith is wrought, sinfull jealousie doth edge and sharpen the wit of carnal reason, to argue and rangle against the work of Faith; and all such Objections as carnal reason doth finde out against it, are pleasing to this corrupt principle; when you try your selves, you will but deceive your selves, if you do not cast out these two cursed corrupt Principles out of your souls: if your hearts be prepossest with either, your judgments will be blinded, and become partial in passing sentence upon your estate. *Take heed of trying your selves by false marks of faith in God*, of weighing with false weights. Hereby you may miscarry both on the *right* hand, and on the *left*: on the *right* hand, if you try your selves by marks of perfect faith in God: on the *left* hand, if you try your selves by such things as are not indeed Scripture-marks of true faith in God; for as God is the *Principium essendi*, the beginning or cause of the being of any grace; so Gods Word is the *Principium cognoscendi*, the Principle by which we know what is true grace. I cannot

Psal. 4. 4.

T. Goodwin's child of light, &c. page 26, 27, 28.

Hickman, &c. page 127, 128, 129.

Burges's Refinings: part 1 page 57, 58.

[illegible] you of three Rules of Direction, which, a worthy now with God, hath left you in this case. (1) *There are some things without which faith cannot be in the heart, and yet they do not necessarily and infallibly conclude that a Man hath faith.* Conclude not for your selves by finding the *antecedents* of Faith. (2) *There are some things which faith only doth produce, yet because it doth not produce them always, a Man must not therefore negatively conclude from the absence of them, the absence of faith.* (3) *There are some things, which faith only doth produce, not as essential properties, but as magnificent Testimonies.* Conclude not against your selves for the want of such effects of faith. Be sure that you do not any longer try your selves by uncertain qualifications, that belong not to every Believer, at all times, and none but believers; but try your selves by sure infallible marks by the essential properties and effects of Faith in God. *Set not about this work without hearty cries to God for his spirit to irradiate the grace you are searching after, and by witnessing with your spirit to put you out of doubt.* It is a vain thing for you to go about this work, much more to think to go through with it by any strength of your own. And be sure that you *take heed of provoking God to withdraw from you in this work. Do not refuse the Light of Assurance when offered:* Hereupon Christ withdrew from the Spouse; but put your selves in a disposed and prepared way to receive the evidencing Light of the Spirit, who will not assure you whether you will, or no. *Do not make use of Signs in a prejudicial way to those direct and immediate Acts of Faith, whereby you close with God:* While you are poring and digging into your own heart to finde faith there, forget not to exercise applicative Acts of Faith. When ever you would go down into your own hearts, and take a view of your own graces first close with God himself in Christ, and afterwards begin afresh upon the encouragement you have from the sight of grace within you, to act Faith upon God with a redoubled strength. *He that lacketh these things, i. e.* that doth not use them, so not to *use* Talents, is not to *have* them, *is blinde* and soon *forgetteth* all the grace he hath. *If God do not appear presently do not murmur and repine against him.* While *Job* thought that God wronged him, God ceased not to scare him with dreams, and terrify him with visions; but when he justified God, God appeared for him. But for a more full handling of the miscarriages about self-examination,

Cant. 4. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Burges, &c. page 56, 57.

1 Pet: 1: 9: Mat: 25: 29:

sion, which you should mourn for, and take heed of, I shall refer you to the *twentieth chapter of the Gospel-glass*.

4. *Resting in an imaginary Assurance.* Presumption is mainly the work of a strong fancy. What the rich Believer hath by propriety and in possession, the same hath the presumptuous Professor in a dreaming fancy and imagination. He pretends to be as knowing, as believing, as confident, as the true Believer; he never doubted of his Interest in God, none more jocond and merry then he is thereupon. Hath not this been your sin? And is not God therefore contending with you? Because we have built our house upon the Sands, is not God razing all our sandy Foundations? Because we have been careless of trying our selves, is not *God trying us as silver is tryed?* May not we even say, *Good and upright is the Lord, that will teach sinners his way*: that by the Thunder-claps of his Righteous Judgements is resolved to awaken us out of those foolish *dreams*, in which if we should die, we were undone for ever? O that we may be dreamers no longer! O, take heed of presuming once more that God is your God, either *because he made you*: so he did the *Devils*. Gods making you, puts you into the relation of *creatures* unto God, and God of a *Creator* unto you, but not of a *chief-good and supream Lord*. He is your Creator, whether you will, or no, but so he is not your God. Or *because you prosper in every thing, and are not in trouble and distress as other men*. The more you have of a *portion in this life*, the more cause you have to fear that *God is not your portion*. Or *because Christ hath died for you to purchase an interest in God*: So he hath, if you will consent to have him for your chief good and Sovereign Lord, otherwise not. O! how great will your confusion be, when your *Gold* shall be found *Dross*, your *Wine* to be *Water*, your *Graces* to be *Corruptions*; And you your selves appear no better then the mad *Athenian*, who thought all the Ships on the Sea were his. 'Take heed of such a confidence of an interest in God, as hath ignorance and self-love for its procreant causes: as is 'grounded on a meer natural light, or some false reasonings: as is wrought 'without any serious & deep humiliation for being without God preceding it, and easily without any opposition: as leaves the soul idle in the 'Work of God, without love to, and encouragement in God: as is not attended with an holy fear and humility: and as is not destroyed by sin, 'but crosses. Such a confidence is a presumptuous confidence, and not assurance. Even hypocrites may have some experimental knowledge, and yet not assurance of Faith: they may know that they are enlightned, and have other common gifts of the Holy-Ghost: that sin is imbittered to their souls: that they do assent to Scripture Truths: that they have some desires after God and Christ: that they do at sometimes and in some things trust in God: and yet they want saving Faith, and therefore cannot know they have it. O take heed of thievishly fingering the Kings Coin without a Warrant: Christ told the Jews, that they were *of their father the Devil*, though of his Father they said, *he is our God*: they made their boasts and brags, that God was their God; but God and Christ disowned them.

Against an imaginary assurance

Psal. 66. 10.

Psal. 25. 8.

Psal. 17. 14.

Burges Reasoning, *part.* 1. *Serm.* 6. *Serm.* 30. and 118.

Serm. 3.

John 8. 54.

Chap. VI. *The miscarriages opposite to confession, the external Act of Faith in God.*

1. *Rash adventuring upon positive confession without a Call from Heaven.* Hath not this been the sin of *some*? and have not all Professors *sinned* for

Against positive confession without a call.

for it? The Acute Author of Christ Confessed (who (as the Publisher observes) hath cut by a thread in clearly and judiciously determing *the present grand Cases of the times*) gives a three-fold Answer to this *Question, At what times are we priviledged from* (and by consequence not called unto) *positive confession of* Christ? (1.) When the *engagements* for *self-safety* are not *preponderated by*, or *in an equal poize with*, those for our Saviours glory. (2.) When the *interest* both of the *confession*, and *Confessor* will be visibly *prejudiced*. (3.) When the *ends* of confessing Christ cannot manifestly be *promoted* by *it*, or *attained* by *us*; But *the glory of God* will be visibly rather *hindred*: *the Gospel harmed*: and *the good of souls hazarded*. O! see that for the future you do not unnecessarily pull sufferings upon your selves for your confession of your Faith. There is (as an eminent Confessor well observes) *a suffering for our faults*: there is *a suffering for our Righteousness without our fault*: and there is *a suffering for our Righteousness through our fault*. Run not your selves upon trouble when you need not, by unwary and imprudent managing and ordering your selves in the duties that confession of Faith engageth you to. Be *clear* especially in those things, which may be *costly*: labour to see *the Pillar of Fire*, and the *Cloud* going before you. Take heed of giving any just occasion to others to persecute you, not onely because the event of so great a temptation is uncertain, but also lest you be a cause that others by shedding your blood become greater sinners then otherwise they would be.

Christ confessed p. 65, 66.

Altera Vind. Godl. p. 379.

2. *Unpreparedness openly to acknowledge faith in God, when ever he calls thereunto.* What the Apostle saith concerning *Hope*, is true concerning *Faith*, *Be ready alwayes to give a reason* both of the *faith* that is *before* you, and of the *faith* that is *within* you: of the *grace*, as well as of the *object* of faith: your own acquaintance with God, believing of God, consenting to have him for your God, and relying upon him. Though you are not bound (saith the *grand Casuist*) to *render* an account *alwayes*, yet you are bound *alwayes* to be ready; at least with an *habitual* readiness; though the *outward act* be not required at all times, yet the *inward habitude* is. But alas! have not you been strangers to an habitual inclination and disposition to this duty? Have not you been without those principles of *self-denyal* and *love* to God, that Spirit of *faith*, *patience*, and *prayer*, that make souls ready for such work. O that this may be your sin no longer! Is not this one reason of the present Dispensations of Providence towards you, to stir you up by the *Rod*, that would not be stirred up by the *Word* to get to be *ready*, *not only to be bound, but to die for Christ at Jerusalem*! The Apostle doth not say, I will be bound or I will die, but *I am ready to be bound and to die*. All backwardness is *sliding back*, when our Saviour saith unto us, *Take up thy Cross and follow me*.

Against unreadiness to confess openly, when called thereto.

1 Pet. 3. 14, 15.

C. C. p. 64.

Acts 21. 13.

3. *Refusing, or delaying, actually to make an open acknowledgment of Faith in God, when thereby God will be most magnified, the Gospel best maintained, and the good of souls best ministred to.* Hath not this been the sin of some of you? Have not you actually *declined* that confession, which you have been called to make? Have not you *deferd* your testimony to another time? and have not you hereby driven God away from you? sure I am this cost many of the Martyrs, especially in the *Marian* Persecution, very dear. They did not make open acknowledgment of their Faith in God, when God called them

Against delaying actually to confess, when called thereto.

them thereunto: and what was the Issue? God in respect of comfort left them, and they were under worse torments, then their Persecutors could have inflicted on them. When *Jonah* had a Commission sealed him to go to *Nineveh* with a Message from God, he withdrew himself, and went another way; but God in the midst of his security cast him into the Whales belly; and when he was there, God withdrew from him, as if he meant never to own him more; insomuch, that he saith, *I am cast out of thy presence.* O that herein you would *sin no more!* when ever God calls you thereto, do not *defer* to exhibit an open *oral* confession of your Faith in God, no, not a moment longer; when God calls you thereto, do not *defer* to exhibit an open *real* confession of your Faith in God in an *active* way, openly living up unto your Faith in God; or in a *passive* way, either by *staying* to suffer, or by suffering in *flying*, as the forementioned *ends* will best be promoted. O! do not your Consciences tell you, that if you had been more publick in your real confessions in an active way, you had suffered less, not only from God, but from men. Take heed of suffering any more upon this account.

Jona. 2. 4.

See Chr[illegible] confessed, *qu.* 7 *prop.* [illegible] *p.* 69. &c.

4. *Dissembling in confession.* There is a time (saith our *Casuist*) for the *suspension* of our confession; but there is no time for *simulation* (properly so called) in our confession. We *may*, yea *must* deal *prudently*, but not *deceitfully*. Hath not this been your sin? Hath not your *conversation* been *in fleshly wisdom*, and not in *godly simplicity and sincerity*? Have not you at least, at sometimes gone about to cast a *vail* of *deceit* before the *eyes* of men? No wonder that such *deceitful* ones are *under tribute*: no wonder that such *treacherous dealings are dealt treacherously with.* Dissemble I beseech you no more, either in your *oral* or in your *real* confessions.

Against dissembling in confession.

C. C. p. 43.

Prov. 12. 24.

Isa. 33. 1.

5. *Denying Faith in God.* Hath not this been your sin? and hath not God therefore denyed you in *this world?* O! take heed of denying your Faith in God once more, lest Jesus Christ deny you in *Heaven.* O! Do not once more deny your Faith in God, either *inwardly*, or *outwardly*, either by *word*, or *work*, whether *explicitly*, or *implicitly*. Even *concealed* & *smothered* (much more *denyed*) truths will one time or other set the Conscience in a *Flame*. When *Jeremiah* said, *I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name*: What followeth? *Then his word was in my brest as a burning fire, shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, Let him not spare* (saith *Job*) *for I have not concealed the words of the Holy One*: *q.d.* If I had *hid* his *word* from *men*, *God* might justly *hide* his *mercies* from *me*; or if I had concealed his *words* from *others*, *God* might now justly *reveal* his *wrath* against *me*.

Against denying Faith in God.

Mat. 10. 33.

Jer. 20. 9.

V. Caril on *Job* 6. 10.

6. *Making shipwrack of Faith.* Hath not this also been your sin? Have not you renounced the confession which you once made? And hath not God departed from you, not only for your departures from your *faith* in him, but for your departures from your *profession* thereof? O! *remember from whence you are fallen, and repent, and do your first works.* What saith the Apostle? *Let us hold fast the profession of our Faith without wavering*, and what ever others do, *let us*, *among* whom, *upon* whom, *in* whom such mighty things have been done by God, [illegible] *fast our Faith*: have we a mind to be without God again? had we ra[illegible] to be Satans, then continue to be the Lords? yea *the profession of* [illegible] faith without profession, will do no more for us, then profession [illegible]? and that *without wavering*: this is both a *man-like* and a [illegible]

Against making shipwrack of Faith.

1 Tim. 1. 19.

Rev. 2. 5.

Heb. 10. 23.

Venning in the Farewel Sermons.